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Sneh: Without Rabin we must be more cautious

DOUGLAS DAVIS LONDON

ISRAEL without Yitzhak Rabin is less capable of making substantive concessions for peace than it was when he was prime minister. Health Minister Ephraim Sneh said here yesterday. "Israel without Rabin lacks the moral authority to make more concessions than Israel with Rabin," he said. "Israel without Rabin must be more cautious. Without the leadership of Rabin, Israel can afford only smaller concessions than in the past because Rabin had a special authority and he had the ability to help Israelis to take risks. "If we adhere to his legacy, we do not do so as a favor, because if we ignore his legacy, we may compromise the security of Israel," he said. "The only responsible path for Israeli leaders is to follow his heritage." He said Prime Minister Shimon Peres stood in the front rank of world leaders, "but Rabin's ability to convince Israelis to take the path of peace was unique. It is very difficult to fill the vacuum his loss has created." Sneh, on a one-day visit to London, made the comments in his keynote address to an international conference on the subject "Israel after Rabin," sponsored by the Britain Israel Public Affairs Center (BIPAC), and King's College, London University. He predicted "very tough negotiations with Syria over a long time" and stressed that Israel must "insist on our security needs." Israel, he said, must not allow its deterrent capacity to be eroded, it must retain strategic supremacy and its nuclear ambiguity. At the same time, he said, Israel should "try everything possible to prepare ourselves and mobilize others to block the very dangerous efforts by Iraq and Iran to acquire unconventional weapons." Sneh listed his fundamental requirements in final status negotiations with the Palestinians as the unity of Jerusalem; demilitarization of the West Bank and Gaza Strip; and an Israeli defense line based on the Jordan River. "I consider these to be red lines," Sneh added. "All the rest is open to negotiations. I hope our party's platform in the forthcoming elections will be along these lines."

IDF officer wins pre-Eurovision contest

LIAT COLLINS

AND the winner is ... Galit Bell and her song "Sbalom Olam." Bell, an IDF officer, was last night chosen out of 12 contestants to represent Israel in the Eurovision Song Contest scheduled to be held May 18 in Oslo. This year's preliminary contest had more than the usual number of unknowns aiming for their 3 minutes fame on television screens throughout Europe. The competition which in the past gave us Rita's shoulder, Yardenia Arzi in red wellington boots, and Zvika Pik in Bermuda shorts, this year presented the public with a show based on sexual innuendo of the most basic "what goes up, must come down" kind. Emcees Tal Mann and Ron Levantthal were so full of zippy, young energy the viewers began (Continued on Page 2)

North American Newsstand Prices for J.P. Friday Edition NY, N.J.: \$3.00 Canada: CDN \$5.00 +TAX Elsewhere: \$4.00

Table with 3 columns: SHABBAT, BEGINS, ENDS. Rows for Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, BeerSheva, Eilat.



Hamas offers Israel cease-fire

Group requests prisoner release and end to 'aggression against Palestinians'

JON IMMANUEL

HAMAS and its armed wing Izzadin Kassam last night offered Israel a cease-fire in return for the release of its prisoners, a halt to "organized terrorism against Hamas and its Kassam brigades ... and an end to aggression against Palestinian civilians." Officials in the Prime Minister's Office refused to comment on the offer. The five-point proposal also contained a threat that if Israel did not respond by 7 p.m. a week from today, "Kassam brigades will be free to take any military action against anyone in the Jewish state ... We warn the Zionist entity and the General Security Service against committing terrorist acts." The contents of the leaflet, which come after several other contradictory statements by Hamas since the Jerusalem and Ashkelon bombings on Sunday,

are not new. But it is notable for being signed by both Hamas and Izzadin Kassam, indicating that they have reached agreement on goals and strategy. Hamas described its offer as "a golden opportunity for the Israeli government to rid civilians from both sides of the fear of war and bloody conflict."

Nabil Abu Rudeineh, a senior adviser to Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat described the leaflet as "a very important political statement. It offers the Israeli government a truce, and I am sure our dialogue with them in Cairo helped." "This does not come out of nothing," Abu Rudeineh said. "It is the result of the carrot and the stick. We cornered them." He said the truce could have been offered earlier, but "it was sabotaged when somebody killed Yihye Ayyash," the bomb-maker considered responsible for several suicide bombings. Some statements in the leaflet contradict previous ones in other leaflets. Izzadin Kassam, the statement

said, had not meant to "embarrass the Palestinian Authority in its last operations and only wanted to average the blood of 'The Engineer.'" In a statement three days earlier, distributed by the PA, it denied taking "direct or indirect responsibility" for Sunday's attacks. Arafat himself returned from Cairo last night, where he met with senior Moslem Brotherhood leaders in an effort to influence Hamas. Hamas claims responsibility for attacks, Page 3



David Levy holds the fax he just received from the Likud at last night's press conference. To his right is MK David Mizgani.

Levy considers Likud proposal

SARAH HONIG

DAVID Levy promised to "study and consider" a new offer from the Likud last night, after he was about to close the door on any agreement. This in effect marks the beginning of formal talks on creating a three-way bloc with the Likud, Tsomet, and Levy's new Geshet Party. The entire effort was revived at the last minute by a Tsomet concession which made it possible for Likud chairman Binyamin Netanyahu to make a new proposal to Levy. Levy had already summoned a press conference to denounce the Likud and the way it had handled the entire episode. He had launched his acerbic attack when a fax from MK Ariel Sharon arrived with the new offer and changed the picture. The sticking point throughout the day was Levy's demand to get precisely what Tsomet had in its agreement with Likud. That would have meant seven safe slots for Levy's people on the list of

Knesset candidates. Netanyahu could not afford to give away so many of the Likud's own slots and had asked that Tsomet make do with just six. But Tsomet had refused until Levy was about to begin his angry press conference. Then Tsomet flinched and Netanyahu's brinkmanship paid off. Tsomet agreed to move its seventh candidate from the 38th to the 42nd slot. The 41st slot would go to Levy's seventh candidate. After first acrimoniously hitting out at the Likud, Levy said he would now "study and consider the offer. The Geshet Party forums will have to decide upon it in the proper manner. Only now will the substantive negotiations actually begin." Levy opened his address to the press by claiming that "there have been no real negotiations up to now, because no formal offer has come to us. A trusted friend, Ariel Sharon, talked to me about the (Continued on Page 2)

With friends like Levy, who needs enemies

COMMENT SARAH HONIG

LIKUD chairman Binyamin Netanyahu must have been asking himself yesterday if David Levy is the sort of partner he could ever work with. Levy exuded hostility in his references to the Likud at his press conference last night, and he spewed venom at Netanyahu, without so much as even mentioning his name. If Levy's strange performance is anything to go by, he hasn't changed a bit. He was full of pomp and pathos, self-indignation and resentment. He sounded like someone who, more than anything, wants to do Netanyahu in, rather than someone who wants to help him in his uphill campaign to be elected prime minister. Levy gave the appearance of

being dragged by his head against his own heart. He knows that on his own he will get very few MKs into the Knesset and that the Likud offers him a way to double his Knesset representation. But what Levy fervently wants is to hurt Netanyahu and prevent him from becoming prime minister by keeping his spoiler candidacy aloft. Levy summoned the press to lash out at his favorite object of hate - Netanyahu. He arrived all fired up and ready to announce that no deal with the Likud was ever in the works, and that at any rate the deal that wasn't had fallen through. Tsomet, however, had spoiled his plans and at the very last second made it possible for

reached him and no negotiations were under way. Now that the offer had come, he would deign to talk. Levy had mounted a rousing defense of his prestige. Having to save face, he refused to admit that he finds the new offer acceptable; all that he would allow is that there is something to consider. He denied that his party is merging into the Likud and maintained that his actions would be determined by what is best to further the week-old Geshet credo. At the outset, however, he described the Likud as down and out, intimating that he is the one who is altruistically out to rescue it. He expressed "utter contempt for this despicable attempt to make us look like petty hagglers."

If yesterday showed anything, it is that his central concern remains his "honor." There was not a word about the national camp, not a word about the state of the nation, or about his attitude toward the Labor coalition's policies. Levy did not appear in the least committed to a change in government. Even if the Likud strikes a deal with him, the question remains how far Levy would really go to help Netanyahu and the Likud. He might sulk just as he did in 1992. The one auspicious note was that Levy promised that if the unnamed Netanyahu changes his ways and a satisfactory agreement is reached and they are forced to work together, he "will even shake his hand."

Court to Treasury: Increase payments to Nazi victims

EVELYN GORDON

THE High Court of Justice yesterday strongly recommended that the Treasury increase its payments to Nazi victims, but the victims said the decision did not go far enough. "I'm not at all pleased," said Moshe Weiss, 70, a survivor of Auschwitz who came to Israel in 1947. "We thought the judges would decide once and for all." Instead, the justices ordered the Treasury to "reconsider" its position "in light of the guidelines in this ruling." "We think [the reconsideration] will take too long," explained Chava Roth, a former Yad Vashem employee who has been involved with the petition. "This is a long process, and there are elections in the middle ... I very much fear that many of the survivors won't live long enough to enjoy the benefits."

Finance Minister Avraham Shohat's response did not quiet these fears. Shohat promised to "honor the court's decision and work to implement it," but only "after [the Treasury] has studied the implications of the decision in depth." Weiss also complained that while the court said the payments should be increased, it did not specify by how much. "[Shohat] will throw us all perhaps another NIS 200 [a month]," he said angrily, noting that his current payment is about NIS 560 a month, compared with about NIS 1,600 for someone paid directly by Germany. The petition, by MK Avraham Hershson (Likud) and four survivors, had asked the court to cor-

rect the disparity between the Treasury's payments and what survivors who are paid by Germany directly receive. The discrepancy resulted from the 1952 reparations agreement with Germany, in which Israel received a lump sum in exchange for a promise that no survivors living in Israel as of October 31, 1953 would sue Germany for compensation. Survivors who arrived after that date could sue Germany directly, however, and those who did so often received three times as much as those paid by the Treasury. The Treasury had argued that the law did not permit it to raise

(Continued on Page 2)

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Peres: We must hold Arafat accountable

ON LEVY

"WE have no choice but to hold Yasser Arafat accountable for what takes place in the territories under his control," Prime Minister Shimon Peres told visiting Hungarian Defense Minister Gyorgi Keleti yesterday.

"We don't want to break him, but to make it clear to him that if things continue as they are now, he himself is liable to fall victim [to the terrorists]."

"We don't expect Arafat to serve the State of Israel. All we ask is that he exercise his authority for security in the areas he controls. We want him to do in Gaza what the Jordanian government does in Amman, and that there won't be two armed forces within the same jurisdiction," Peres said.

Peres also said Israel has done more for the Palestinians than any other country, certainly more than the Arab states.

He briefed Keleti on the situation in the region, saying the peace process will take time, and has long been opposed by extremists. But, he added, he hopes the Arab-Israeli conflict will be resolved by the year 2000.

Keleti thanked Peres for the warm reception he has received here, and hoped for a closer defense relationship between the two countries. He expressed the condolences of the Hungarian people and government for the three terror attacks this week.

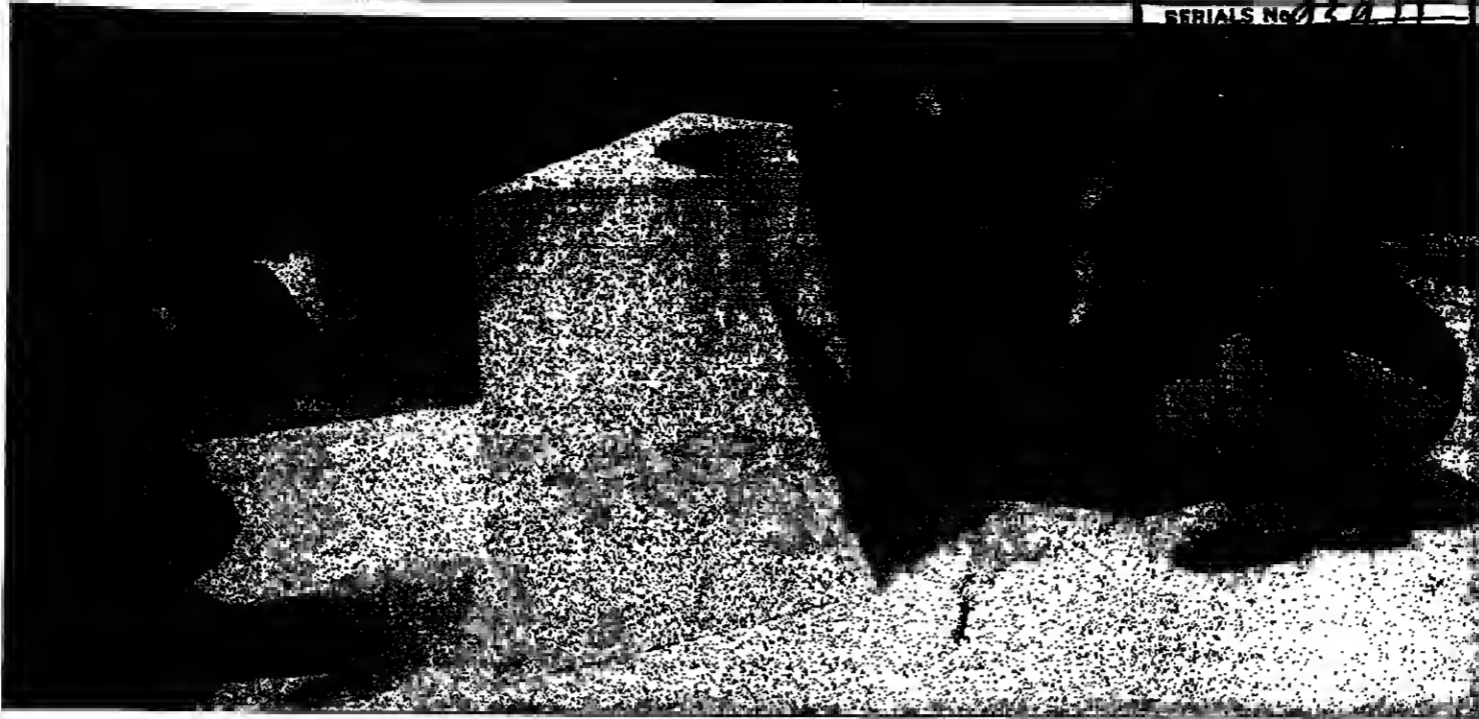
Leftists, haredim nearly clash at bombing site

POLICE and border policemen yesterday prevented a violent clash between haredim and leftist activists at the square near this week's Jerusalem bus bombing.

The Labor Party Youth came to the site to hold a vigil in honor of the victims. Shortly after they arrived, hundreds of haredim began gathering, and loud quarrels began. As a brawl was about to begin, security forces stepped in and separated the two sides.

The haredim claimed the Labor Youth planned to hold a political demonstration, and that there was no place for this at a site where dozens of people had been killed. Labor activist Lior Horov said the haredim are not allowing other groups to come and express their sorrow over the killings. "The Likud is trying to gain political capital from the attack and is dividing the people."

The haredim responded by saying "traitors" and "Peres is next."



Workers from Abn Gosh put the finishing touches on Yitzhak Rabin's tombstone, which will be unveiled today on what would have been his 74th birthday. The ceremony, to begin at 10:30 a.m. at Mt. Herzl cemetery, will be attended by the president, prime minister, cabinet members, chief of general staff, and members of the diplomatic corps. (Ariel Jerolimski)

Dan Morali gets life for murder of Palestinian

DANIEL Morali, 44, was sentenced to life imprisonment yesterday by Beersheba District Court for the March 1994 murder of a Palestinian truck driver who was praying by the roadside.

In December, Morali, of Ashkelon, was convicted of the premeditated murder of Riad Salmiye, 35, from Kafr Ina, near Hebron.

Morali apparently decided to kill Salmiye to avenge the death of his brother, a border policeman who was hit by an Arab car in Hebron.

After the conviction, Morali said the court was making him a scapegoat because of the change in public atmosphere after the Rabin assassination. According to testimony at his trial, Morali was driving along the Kiryat Gat-Hebron road when he saw a truck

stopped by the roadside and Salmiye standing beside it. He made a U-turn and drove back and shot Salmiye, who managed to live long enough to report his assailant's license plate number.

Morali gave several versions of the cause of the murder. In one, he said he fired at Salmiye because he thought he was about to commit an act of terrorism. He said Salmiye "made a strange, sudden movement with his hands and was calling out in Arabic."

The court concluded, however, that Salmiye was merely praying.

A psychiatrist called by Morali's defense testified that Morali was in a state of "pathological grief" at the time of the murder, because his brother had been killed a year earlier.

The three judges rejected that argument. (Itim)

Tibi rejects crackdown on Hamas as political entity

DAVID RUDGE

THE Palestinian Authority must deal immediately with radical Islamic terrorists whose actions also harm the interests of the Palestinian people, but not with Hamas as a political entity, Dr. Ahmed Tibi, an adviser to PA President Yasser Arafat, said yesterday.

"There is a difference between Hamas, which is a popular movement representing 25 percent of the Palestinian people, and those armed units which use terror," said Tibi.

"The PA has to deal with these units with more determination than in the past. We are talking about dozens of activists, for whose despicable terrorist actions the Palestinian people are paying a heavy price."

They are endangering the proposed redeployment, agreements reached between Israel and the PA, as well as harming the Pales-

tinian economy by causing the closure of the territories, said Tibi.

He maintained, however, that this form of "collective punishment" is counterproductive and ultimately harmful to Israel's interest, because it increases tension and pushes people into extremism.

"These armed groups are killing innocent people, violating the Palestinian law and damaging the highest interests of the Palestinians," he said. "They must be dealt with according to Palestinian law, but not like some Israelis are saying by elimination."

"Anybody who violates the law must be arrested and brought to trial as soon as possible. It should be noted, however, that those responsible for the bus attacks came from an area under Israeli control, Hebron, and out from the PA areas."

Hamas claims Sunday's attacks

JON IMMANUEL

HAMAS yesterday issued a leaflet confirming responsibility for the Jerusalem and Ashkelon attacks and identified Ibrahim Sarabna, 25, and Majdi Abu Wadeh, 19, both of the Fawwar refugee camp, near Hebron, as the perpetrators.

The two families, meanwhile, welcomed guests to celebrate their "martyrdom."

The leaflet, issued in Hebron after the names of the suspected suicide bombers had already been released, appeared genuine and said that "jihad will continue until the occupation is removed from every bit of Palestine."

It contradicted other leaflets by Izzadin Kassam, the armed wing of Hamas, which denied responsibility, and by "The Cell of the Martyr Yihye Ayyash," which claimed responsibility but offered a "historic position," if Israel stopped pursuing Hamas and released Hamas prisoners.

If the Hebron leaflet is genuine, the other leaflets are fake or

show a division of opinion in Hamas over both the utility of Sunday's massacre and future political strategy.

The Palestinian Authority distributed a leaflet by Izzadin Kassam, which some claim the PA dictated, denying responsibility, but it has been arresting Hamas activists and has ordered all unlicensed weapons to be handed in by today, after which it will raid places where its suspects unlicensed arms are hidden.

It is the second time guns have been called in during the past year, both after Israel demanded the measure following bombing attacks. The first attempt was largely unsuccessful.

In Fawwar, Reuters reported joy among relatives and many others in the camp of 5,000 when the Hamas leaflet confirmed the "martyrdom" of Sarabna and Wadeh.

"We are not accepting condolences, we are accepting congratulations," said signs hanging in their homes.

Closure eased for Gaza goods

Jerusalem Post Staff and news agencies

ISRAEL allowed goods in yesterday from the Gaza Strip, after imposing a closure on the territories following Sunday's suicide bombings, Palestinian and Israeli officials said.

In another development, Finance Minister Avraham Shohat ordered the VAT Authority to deduct NIS 3.5 million from the sums owed to the Palestinian Authority in order to pay for the PA's water bill.

The PA was warned to pay Merkot for the use of water by West Bank residents. The PA also owes money to Bezek and

Hadassah.

The army announced yesterday it was letting goods in "back-to-back" - taking them off Palestinian trucks on one side of the border and loading them on Israeli trucks on the other side.

"The back-to-back exchange of goods at Karni is going on," a Palestinian officer at Karni checkpoint between Israel and Gaza said. "Essential goods are being brought into Gaza, and Palestinian agricultural products are leaving to Israel and the West Bank."

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Harsh facts of life

YOSEF GOELL

THIS week's renewed spate of Palestinian terrorist outrages against Israeli civilians came within two days of the barbarous slaughter of the returning Iraqi defectors and their families by Saddam Hussein.

At first there seems little connection between the events in Jerusalem and Ashkelon, in which 25 civilians were slaughtered by two young Palestinian suicide bombers, and Saddam Hussein's butchery in Iraq.

But there is a common denominator - Arab public opinion's apparent acceptance of such brutalities as a social norm.

Following the Jerusalem bus bombing, Israel TV showed Yasser Arafat saying in English that this was no heroic military operation, but terrorism plain and simple. By Arafat's standards this constituted a major new departure, and it undoubtedly took great political daring.

But before we rush to greet the onset of millennial peace and brotherly love, let us recall that the same Arafat continues to refer to the perpetrators of such suicide bombings as *shahidim* - martyrs - and to tolerate and even foster popular adulation for them throughout the Palestinian Authority he rules.

Much more telling than Arafat's speaking out of both sides of his mouth, however, is the fact that no other public Palestinian figures - intellectuals, writers, poets, Western-educated academics or religious leaders - have unequivocally condemned the resort to fighting by the use of human bombs. Nor has any member of the suicide bombers' families denounced the waste of the young killers' own lives.

I would like to go on record as stating my conviction that even during these recent bloody years, the overwhelming majority of Palestinians or Arabs have never killed or tortured another human being. But Arab society and accepted social norms are another matter.

And it's not merely a matter of implacable Palestinian or Arab hatred for Jews and Israelis, the

only a few of our neighbors - we see the same intrinsic brutality in their societies. Within Israel, we continue to witness the ritual murder of Israeli Arab women by their closest male kinfolk on the merest suspicion of sexual impropriety.

It is instructive to note that B'tselem, the self-appointed leftist Israeli monitor of civil rights violations by Israeli authorities in the territories, is today in crisis as regards continuing its operations - for the reason that the Palestinian Authority will simply not tolerate such do-gooder meddling on its turf.

BRUTALITY as an inherent part of Arab society is a fact of life which has been intentionally or inadvertently ignored by Israeli policy makers in the two-and-a-half years of the Oslo process.

But it is a fact that puts a serious limit on what we can expect from our Palestinian neighbors. Prime Minister Peres, driven

Israeli policy makers have ignored the brutality that is inherent in Arab society

by the enormity of this week's outrages and by their implication for his chances in the forthcoming elections, will most likely take heroic steps to impress upon Arafat the need to fight continuing terrorism in the territories which have been given over to his control.

Arafat can do more in this respect. Of that there is no doubt. But our estimation of how much he can and will be ready to do stems from the wrong perception that we are involved in a historic conciliation process between two erstwhile enemy peoples.

All the indications of the past two-and-a-half years are that *nothing could be further from the truth.*

Arafat leads a significant element of Palestinian pragmatists who are out to get as much as they can from an infinitely stronger Israel. He is opposed by romantics and radicals who consider it horrendous to permit such "dishonorable" pragmatism to overshadow their continuing hostility to Israel - and these opponents enjoy widespread public support.

Both pragmatists and radicals continue to share that deep hatred of Israel. For example, since Oslo not one official Palestinian spokesman has justified the existence of the State of Israel, even though they might bow to the bitter reality. Where the pragmatists and radicals differ is how they express that hatred in day-to-day life.

Israel can reap advantages from the emergence of Arafatian pragmatism. But it would be suicidal for us to misinterpret such self-serving pragmatism as a Palestinian commitment to conciliation and peaceful relations.

It is that wrong perception - as in the mistaken decision to lift the closure on the territories last week - that has blinded so many in the Labor government and led them to place greater emphasis on the Palestinians' economic needs than on Israelis' very basic need for personal security.

The writer comments on public affairs.



A people that can live together

YISRAEL MEIR LAU

AFTER the bus bombing in Jerusalem on Sunday, I visited many of the people who had been injured, including those in intensive care in the hospitals.

Sitting with the families who were enduring their long vigils in the hospital waiting rooms was, I found, harder than trying to comfort the injured in the wards.

That same day, I began to make the rounds of the bereaved families. Each visit left its mark, but there was one couple in the Katamon neighborhood that I will never forget.

When I entered their house, I found them sitting quite alone. Their only son, aged 22, had been slain in the bombing, a month before he was due to finish his military service.

The parents were Holocaust survivors. They had built their home in Jerusalem after the founding of the state, and had had no more children after this one son. They had devoted their whole lives to him.

Now they were just sitting there, their whole world collapsed around them. They hadn't even posted a death notice. "Whom should I tell?" asked the mother.

What could one say to a couple like this, who will have no one to say *Kaddish* for them? I felt like the three friends of the biblical Job. Job lost all his children and all his possessions, then found himself afflicted with boils.

In contrast to the past, I heard

no one lash out, accusing our leaders of being traitors or murderers. I sensed no hatred. Truly, we behaved more like Job's friends, who stayed and suffered together with him.

I felt this both in the hospitals I visited, and in the homes of the

bereaved families. The pain was there - great pain; but there was a restraint. I have a thought, and I do not know whether it is a comfort or not.

According to the Babylonian Talmud, three things are achieved through suffering: Torah, the Land of Israel, and the world to come.

As far as suffering for the land is concerned, we have felt that keenly over the last 100 years at least. But I would like to stress that the War of Independence didn't end in 1949. It is still going on, the many cease-fires notwithstanding.

And the sacrifices we have made over the last two-and-a-half years have not been sacrifices for peace, but for the redemption of the Jewish people in its homeland.

In Africa, we have seen examples of peoples liberated from colonialism virtually without blood-

shed. They became free without war. It has happened in Eastern Europe too, and elsewhere.

In this too, the Jewish people are an exception. To this day, there are those who do not recognize our right to return to our homeland.

Nevertheless, we must be optimistic.

On November 29, 1947, when the UN decided on the establishment of a Jewish state in part of the Land of Israel, all the Arab countries, both those near us and those further off, objected, denying our God-given right to our land. Seven of them made war against us.

Today there are only four countries in the region hostile to us - Iraq, Iran, Libya, and Syria - and Syria is ready for some kind of negotiation. This shows that despite everything, we are on the right road.

The more Jews make aliyah, the more our enemies will understand that we have returned to the land of our fathers in order never again to be separated from it. The State of Israel, with Jerusalem as its capital, is an eternal fact that cannot be altered.

There is a verse in Exodus that says "As much as they were tortured, so did they multiply and flourish." It is my belief that this quality still characterizes the Jewish people.

The writer is Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel.

This week a nation trembled with pain. Yet surely it cannot be vanquished

Fatalism mixed with fear

BATYA MEDAD

Ilive in Shilo. People always ask if I'm afraid to travel. The roads are dangerous - whether it's accidents, terrorist attacks, or Arab schoolchildren throwing rocks and bricks.

Our life here is all so different from the Pollyannaish America of the 1950s in which I grew up.

To survive emotionally, I've forced myself to become fatalistic, recognizing that I have no control, that death can come from any direction.

On Monday I was standing at the hitchhiking post in French Hill, talking about this fatalistic approach with a neighbor who was also waiting for a ride. As an example of the unpredictability of life I cited the death of my friend Leah, who was found brain-dead a year ago from unknown causes.

I gave my neighbor a copy of the memorial booklet Leah's family and friends had just had printed, then turned back to the road to watch for familiar cars that could take us home.

My attention was caught by a dark-colored vehicle speeding along near the curb. I turned to my neighbor to say: "What a crazy driver! Even if he is going to Shilo, we're not getting in." Two words into the sentence I was knocked down, then felt a great weight on my feet, and heard shooting close by. I felt paralyzed. I couldn't move.

Everyone wonders how they would react if they were confronted by bullets, blood, serious injury, and the like. Just the day before, with images before our eyes of people blown to smithereens, of bodies so dismembered that the fatalities could only be calculated after counting body parts, a friend and I had candidly

admitted to each other that we probably could never manage to give an injured person first aid.

It embarrasses me to confess that when I was put to the test at French Hill, barely a day later, I was proven right.

How could the police think the French Hill driver was anything but a terrorist?

The military, who thought the car might be booby-trapped, told us to get as far away as possible. "The car is going to explode," they kept repeating. With the help of my friend, I managed to get up and we fled. I'm no hero.

DRAGGING my injured foot, not yet swollen, we walked until we could find a bus. There were soldiers coming from all directions - even jumping off the high wall onto the sidewalk - and I was terrified that after surviving the car and the shooting I would end up being accidentally killed by a soldier landing on my head.

My instincts told me to keep moving, and it was a good feeling to know that I could walk on my injured foot. But my brain told me I had to get it X-rayed. I said goodbye to my friend and took another bus, to the area of the Central Bus Station and called the emergency 101 number. Still in a state of unreality and filled with nervous energy, I hobbled the kilometer to the Magen Da-

vid Adom building.

It was there I heard the shocking news on the radio - that the police were trying to prove it wasn't a terrorist attack, just a simple accident - sure, and I'm Marilyn Monroe!

My aggravation was so pronounced that they wouldn't release me until my blood pressure had been checked. I used all my mental strength to calm myself so as to register an acceptable reading. Thank God, there were no bones broken, and my blood pressure was normal.

But now there's a new fear to add to terrorists, traffic accidents, illness, and the like.

How in heaven's name could the police ever have thought that such an attack could have been an accident? My neighbors, who saw the car plough into the people waiting at the hitching post - killing one and injuring many - were told that the police weren't interested in their eyewitness accounts.

We need to trust the police, not suspect them and their judgment. I must go on with my life. Any change in our routine gives our enemies a victory.

After the attack, I thought I would never return to the hitching post. And riding home later with a friend who had come to fetch me, I was certain it would be empty. How could anyone have the courage to stand there ever again?

My friends and neighbors were there. We stopped the car and filled up the back seat. When my leg is strong enough to stand on, I guess I'll be there too.

The writer lives in Shilo.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA

deeply mourns the passing of
BARNEY DAVID (Dusty) MILLER

a member of the Board of Governors and
a longtime friend and supporter

and extends its sincere condolences
to all the family

On the first Yahrzeit of our beloved
Rabbi Dr. LOUIS BERNSTEIN ז"ל

we will gather at the Eretz Hachayim Cemetery (near Beit Shemesh)
at 9 a.m. on Monday, March 4 (13 Adar).

The Family

On the first Yahrzeit of the passing of our beloved
PEPI ELTES ז"ל

We will gather for an Erev Limud in her memory
on Sunday evening, March 3, 1996, at 8 p.m.,
at Beit Shalom, 2 Shit Street (corner of 11 Graetz), Tel Aviv.

The Family

The Masorti Movement
The Rabbinical Assembly of Israel
Congregation "Ma'ayanot"
deeply mourn the tragic deaths of

MATTHEW EISENFELD
and **SARA DUKER** ז"ל

Students of our Beit Midrash and
The Jewish Theological Seminary of America
...אנחנו בכבוד ודודים את נשמותיהם...
"May their souls be bound up in the bond of life..."
along with all the recent victims of terror in
Jerusalem and Ashkelon

The Management and Staff
of The Jerusalem Post
extend sincerest condolences to

Haim Shapiro
on the passing of his mother

LEILA SHAPIRO

With deep sorrow we announce the death of our wife,
mother and grandmother

LEILA SHAPIRO

The funeral will take place in Hollywood, Florida.

Rabbi David Shapiro
Haim and Francine Shapiro
Alex, Leora and Zvi
Judy and Stanley Saxe,
Harriet, Natalie and Neal

With great sorrow and heavy hearts we mourn
the death of our mother

MAUREEN GOULD STARR

Who passed away in Birmingham, England,
after a long illness.

Penny Starr
Fiona Starr
Carolyn Starr

To the
KAVALSKY FAMILY

Our deepest sympathy and sincerest condolences
on the sudden loss of our dear friend and colleague

LEN KAVALSKY

Leonard Sackstein, Lawrence Goodman,
and all Len's many friends at Taste of Israel.

We mourn the passing, after a brief illness,
of our devoted wife and mother

ROSA NEUFLIESS ז"ל

Werner Neufliess, Shavel Zion
Dalia Neufliess - Barky, Roni,
Tal and Larry, Haifa

On the fourth anniversary of the passing of our beloved
AVRAHAM HARMAN

we will visit his graveside on Friday, March 1, 1996.
We will gather at the entrance to the
Givat Shaul cemetery at 9:30 a.m.

The family

'Russian area near Chechnya hit by air raid'

TIMOTHY HERITAGE

THE leader of Ingushetia said military helicopters launched an air strike in his southern Russian region yesterday, reviving fears that it could be sucked into conflict with Russia like neighboring Chechnya. Only Russia has military helicopters in the region.

Ingush President Ruslan Aushev's press office said combat helicopters had made three rocket attacks on the mountain village of Arshy, close to the border with Chechnya. Russia's defense ministry said it was unable to confirm the attack.

"There are wounded. One person is in a critical condition," said the Ingush statement, which was sent to news organizations.

It said the figures came from an Ingush "working group," but gave no details of which government department it worked for.

Interfax news agency quoted Aushev's press office as saying later that Arshy itself had not come under attack but an area near the village had been fired on from the direction of the nearby settlement of Bamut in Chechnya.

Russia's official Itar-Tass news agency quoted sources in Arshy as saying no rockets had hit the village.

The Ingush statement said it was practically impossible to enter the village because of bad weather and the poor state of roads, damaged by Russia's 58th Army in a five-day siege of Arshy and nearby Galashki which ended only on Monday.

The only contact with Arshy was by radio, it said.

Aushev said last week he feared fighting could spread from Chechnya to Ingushetia, a mostly agricultural region with a population of about 200,000 people.

(Reuters)

Cuba warns US over new exile flotilla

HAVANA (Reuters) - Warning that it would use all necessary means to counter violations of its territory, Cuba yesterday urged the United States to stop a planned new exile flotilla of boats and planes near Cuba this weekend.

Havana also condemned plans for legislation in the US to toughen Washington's 34-year-old economic embargo against the island, saying it would badly set back any efforts to solve the long-standing US-Cuban dispute.

US President Bill Clinton has said he will sign the legislation as part of his protest at Cuba's shooting down of two small US private planes last Saturday.

Cuba says it downed the planes, operated by the Cuban exile group Brothers to the Rescue, in defense of its airspace and after issuing warnings. Four crew members were presumed dead.

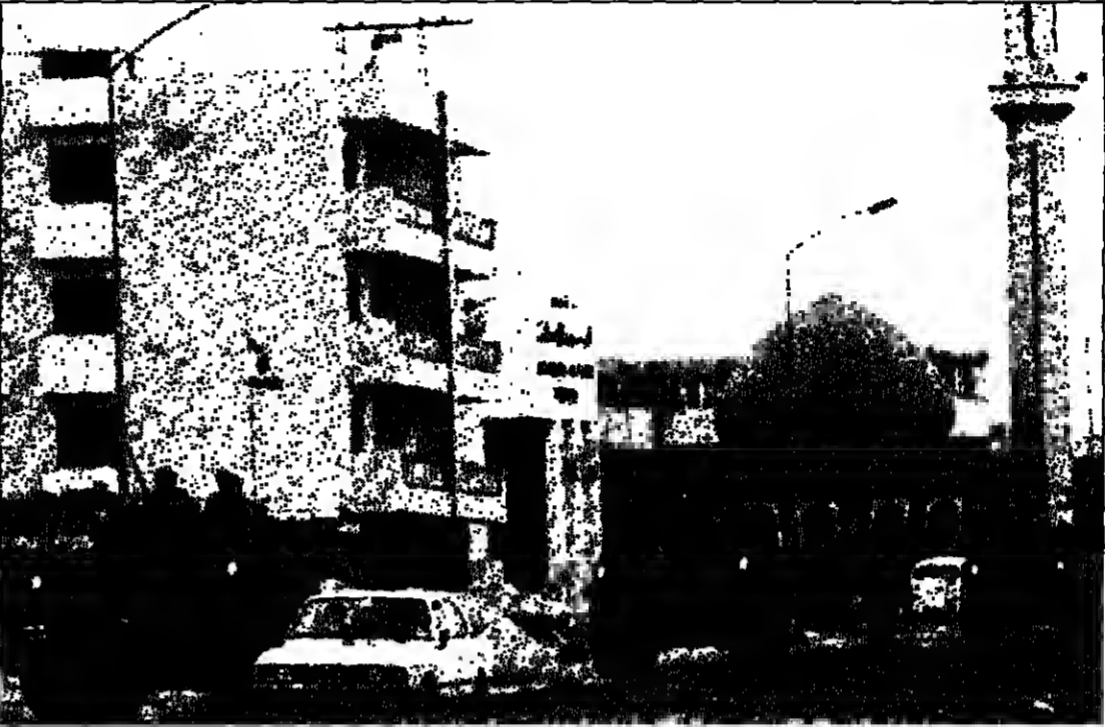
Referring to exile plans to send

a fresh flotilla of boats and two planes near Cuba tomorrow, senior Foreign Ministry official Carlos Fernandez de Cossio told reporters the US had the legal and technical means to stop any violation of Cuban territory and should do so.

The US could use its Neutrality Act that aims at preventing provocation of another country, he said, adding that for the Washington not to take measures to prevent the planned flotilla would be irresponsible.

"The question is: 'What will the United States do?'" asked Fernandez de Cossio, head of the Foreign Ministry's North America department. "If they [the exile flotilla] come to international waters [or international airspace], they should have no difficulty... but if not, Cuba will not permit this."

"If they try to penetrate Cuban



Lebanese troops in armored vehicles patrol the road to Beirut International Airport yesterday during a nationwide imposed curfew.

10 Indian politicians arrested

NEW DELHI (AP) - A judge yesterday ordered the arrest of 10 politicians charged in a \$18-million bribery scandal, including four former cabinet ministers and the leader of India's largest opposition party.

The warrants were the latest indication of the unusually hard-hitting approach that the courts are taking in the case, and the impact it could have on a general election expected in April.

Corruption has long been prevalent at all levels of government, but this is the first scandal to embroil the top rungs of the hierarchy and all three main political parties. It is front-page news across India, and appears to have left many people hoping their country is finally prepared to fight such crimes.

Lebanon showdown raises concern about Hariri

BEIRUT (Reuters) - Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri brought in the army yesterday to impose a nationwide curfew and foil workers' protests in a showdown with labor that intensified concerns about his democratic credentials.

Under orders from Hariri, the army kept the country under curfew from 3 a.m. to 2 p.m. and arrested thousands of people to prevent a general strike and anti-government demonstrations that Hariri had banned.

The official National News Agency said troops arrested 2,500 people during the 11-hour curfew, mostly ordinary citizens breaking the curfew, and most were being freed quickly.

There were no reports of disturbances or demonstrations but

Hariri's decision to use the army brought criticism.

"Hariri with a semi-state of emergency is less than the Hariri who started as a dream, then became a hope, then a promise and then a probability," the leftist daily *As-Safir* said.

It sarcastically referred to the billionaire construction tycoon as a "martial law governor," and said that by using the army to prop up his government Hariri was showing that he had lost popularity and political strength since he took over in October 1992.

"This is a dictatorship disguised as a democracy," said a Beirut newspaper commentator who asked not to be identified.

"Many Lebanese say we need a dictatorship to put things in order.

IRA gives no cease-fire guarantee to Adams

LONDON (Reuters) - Leading nationalist politicians from Northern Ireland yesterday dampened hopes of an early resumption of the IRA's cease-fire after failing to win firm pledges at a secret meeting with leaders of the guerrilla group.

Gerry Adams, president of the Irish Republican Army's political wing, Sinn Fein, and moderate nationalist John Hume said they met the IRA on Wednesday hours after Britain and Ireland unveiled plans to invite Sinn Fein to all-party peace talks on June 10 if the guerrillas silenced their guns.

Hume, the leader of the Social Democratic and Labor party, said that Adams had joined him in urging the IRA to resume its cease-fire once again, but without success.

Asked if the guerrillas would end a bombing campaign they resumed on February 9 after an 18-month truce, Hume told BBC radio: "You know what my views are."

"They [the IRA] gave me no guarantees of that nature at all."

Adams said a just political settlement to the conflict in Northern Ireland, which claimed more than 3,200 lives in 25 years, would require an end to all armed action.

"If you're saying to me, do I think that'll happen tonight or tomorrow night or the next night, I think it's most unlikely," he told BBC radio.

The IRA guerrillas, who seek an end to British rule in Northern Ireland, did not trust Britain, Adams told Irish radio.

"These people told us that they were totally skeptical and distrustful of the way the British government used and abused the 18-month cessation [cease-fire]," he said.

German spy chief quits

BONN (Reuters) - The head of Germany's foreign intelligence service quit yesterday after his spies became embroiled in scandals over secrets-for-cash and a sting operation to catch plutonium smugglers.

As head of the Federal Intelligence Service (BND), Konrad Porzner had won a reputation as a stickler for the rules who failed to keep close tabs on his staff or to keep the BND out of the firing line, particularly in the plutonium-smuggling affair.

Porzner, 61, issued a terse statement saying the head of Helmut Kohl's chancellery, Friedrich Bohl, had refused his request to move two senior BND officials or retire them.

US presidential candidates spar in debate

COLUMBIA, South Carolina (AP) - The Republican presidential candidates traded barbs over social issues and taxes yesterday, and Bob Dole came under fire for his support of tax increases over the years.

"Don't malign my integrity," Dole snapped back in a nighttime debate.

Their encounter underscored that the campaign had moved into the conservative South. The candidates said the all-male Citadel should be allowed to bar women. And the Confederate flag, Pat Buchanan said, was a symbol of defiance and courage, not racism.

"My friends, if there is room in America for the fighting song of the civil rights movement 'We Shall Overcome,' then there's got to be room for Dixie as well," he said.

After the moderator played a Dole ad that labeled Buchanan an extremist, Buchanan criticized it as a sign of the "hollowness" of Dole's campaign. "It's the same name they called Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan," he said.

Dole was repeatedly hit for his votes for tax increases during his 35-year Senate career. He joked at one point that he was "tired of being the punching bag." But when Steve Forbes attacked him again, Dole said, "Don't malign my integrity here," a comment reminiscent of his 1988 reply to Bush to "stop lying about my record."

"It's a typical Washington game," countered Forbes.

The event, which was to be televised nationally later in the evening, was one of the more spirited clashes the candidates had had.

It was a sign of the stakes in the days ahead. South Carolina Republicans vote tomorrow, followed by primary voting in eight more states on Tuesday. Only a few candidates will survive that

US presidential candidates spar in debate

balloting. In South Carolina, Dole was leading in polls published this week, with Buchanan trailing.

The four major candidates were the only ones invited to the debate. Long-shot candidate Alan Keyes wasn't asked to participate and said he would stage a hunger strike in protest.

The debate began with a feud over negative campaign ads. Lamar Alexander confronted Dole on his campaign's tenor, and scolded, "Bob, that needs to stop."

Forbes conceded, "I regret having spent so much time discussing my opponents." Buchanan agreed: "You're right - you overdid it."

"Steve Forbes has been very effective with negative advertising," said Dole. "He's the king of negative advertising."

The most heated exchange was between Forbes and Alexander, with the former Tennessee governor defending himself against charges he grew rich by using his political connections.

"Steve, you haven't learned a single thing in the whole campaign," Alexander said. "You know that's not true."

Forbes, referring to some of his negative ads, noted that he had never questioned Alexander's "cozy business deals."

"You wait just a minute," Alexander said, shouting him down. "My ethics have never been questioned."

On social issues, the candidates all sounded conservative themes, with Buchanan staking out the strictest anti-abortion stance.

נתי מרבה

The unveiling of the tombstone for our beloved mother,
grandmother and great-grandmother

Rebbetzin RIVKA BRAVER ז"ל

will take place on Thursday, March 7, 1996, at 4:30 p.m.
at Har Hamenuhot, Jerusalem.
Transportation: Leaving 4 p.m.
from 5 Keren Hayesod (Dolgin-Baer). Tel. 02-258410.

Ralph Braver, Miriam Lifschutz (Chicago)
Shoshana Dolgin-Baer
Rabbi Joseph Braver (Baltimore)

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of

MEYER H. (Mike) BARGTEIL ז"ל
beloved husband of **Hannah S. Bargteil** ז"ל

The funeral will be at Eretz Hachayim Cemetery, Sunday,
March 3, 1996 at 10:00 a.m. Bus will leave from just below
Cong. Moreshet Yisrael on Agron Street at 8:45 a.m.
In lieu of flowers the family suggests contributions to the
Meyer H. Bargteil Memorial Fund
of the AACI Jerusalem Scholarship Fund.

Son: Michael - USA
Granddaughter: Dora (Dae) and Yehuda Ankonina - Jerusalem
Granddaughter: Michelle and Howard Covert - USA
Great-grandchildren: Yarden Chen and Yuval Mor - Jerusalem
Brother: Ralph and Molly Baral
The family in USA and Canada

Shiva at Ankonina home: 9/8 David Niv Street, Pigeat Ze'ev Ma'arav.

The AACI Jerusalem Scholarship Fund
extends condolences to

Michael, Dora, Michelle and Marilyn
on the passing of our dear friend, founder and builder of the
Jerusalem Scholarship Fund

MEYER H. (Mike) BARGTEIL ז"ל
Husband of **Hannah ז"ל**

In an obituary announcement published in
yesterday's paper, the name of Sara Duker
was inadvertently misspelled.

הקדמת הצמר

NEWS IN FOCUS

Friday, March 1, 1996

The fallout: Netanyahu responds with dignity...

IRA gives no cease-fire guarantee Adams

In their initial reactions soon after the twin blasts this week, both principal contenders for prime minister gave an incredibly politically correct performance. Under the circumstances they came across as the epitome of sober, statesmanlike demeanor.

Unlike his slain predecessor, Peres did not engage in abrasive bookkeeping, insensitively chide the shocked public for being cry-babies or lash out at the opposition and accuse it of collaborating with Hamas.

Not that the opposition gave him any opportunity to rake it over the coals.

Having burnt his fingers with too fiery a reaction after last year's Dizengoff bus explosion, Binyamin Netanyahu was flawless this time.

He did not rush to the site of the smoldering bus but issued his statement from the dignified surroundings of Metzudat Ze'ev, calling for solidarity and unity. He pledged unstinting support for the government — should it adopt the necessary measures against terror.

He thus implied that these measures are not now in force, while at the same time not allowing himself to be faulted for carping comments when he was offering cooperation. It was classic political sophistication, especially as he went further and urged his party faithful to desist from demonstrating.

But if a political analyst from Mars were to descend into our ostensibly harmonious midst and conclude that this tragedy would have no quick political ramifications, he would be dead wrong.

It's something few Likud politicians like to speak of for the record lest they be accused of "dancing on blood." Yet it is quickly claimed in the Likud that this is precisely what Labor did on the eve of the 1992 elections.

when the stabbing of schoolgirl Helena Rapp in Bat Yam was openly exploited in Labor's election broadcasts. Haim Ramon's cry of "get Gaza out of Tel Aviv," has left its indelible imprint on our political culture.

The Likud now maintains that not only had Labor failed to fulfill its promise of four years ago to improve the average Israeli's personal safety — a cornerstone of the party's electoral victory — but that things have gotten hideously worse. Since the Oslo accords nearly 200 Israelis have died in terror attacks, a considerably greater number than during any comparable period since the state's independence.

"The total collapse of a government's central policy plank is certainly an elections issue and not anything that can be described as exploiting bloodshed," says Likud MK Tzahi Hanegbi, one of Netanyahu's closest lieutenants.

"When Israelis are afraid to ride a bus or drive or walk near one, something is wrong — especially when the problem is aggravated by the government's reckless gambling with the lives of its citizens and especially when the incumbents came to power on the promise to achieve precisely the reverse," Hanegbi continues.

"The government's policy lies in shambles and the prime minister promises us more of the same. Certainly it's a legitimate campaign issue."

Those who had kept their "eyes open all along could not have failed to notice the total duplicity with which Arafat is dealing with the Peres government," adds Hanegbi.

"He has violated his side of the bargain throughout. He has never made a move to hand over the most despicable of the murderers who found safe haven in his fiefdom. Terror can be reduced but

What effects may this week's terror attacks have on the election campaign? Sarah Honig reports

for that, the government must cease counting on Arafat to do its job.

"He is not threatened by Islamic fanatics but works hand in glove with them. They slaughter and he gets territorial rewards. Peace must be made with a partner who wants peace and not with a group of which only half favors peace, or a third or a quarter.

"We cannot stand helpless at the autonomy gates, unable to pursue hutchers or secure intelligence. To just hope that there won't be another bus blast is an unconscionable disregard for the lives of ordinary Israelis."

BUT the problem existed prior to the Jerusalem and Ashkelon outrages, so why assume that these incidents will change opinions? The answer from Likud strate-

gists is that the latest horrors might indeed change nothing. Terror rarely alters political positions, they venture, but it does bolster prior political tendencies.

The latest bombings may simply bring back to the Likud those who in recent months proclaimed themselves undecided or floating voters. This assertion is borne out by the polls conducted on Black Sunday.

Until then, for nearly four months the polls showed a 15-20% gap in Peres's favor. Ever since the Rabin assassination Netanyahu's fortunes seemed to nosedive, apparently because heaps of mud were slung at him while Peres was enjoying a political honeymoon.

But literally overnight Peres's lead seems to have been erased. A poll conducted by Mina Tzema for Yedioth Aharonot after the twin onslaughts essentially indicates parity with Peres at 48% and Netanyahu at 46%. Six percent were still in the "don't know" category. Her margin of error was 4%.

A careful study of the poll will show that Peres had not lost much ground. Support for Netanyahu went up by some 10% but the most dramatic aspect of the poll was the sharp drop in the numbers of those who had declared themselves undecided. More than Netanyahu gained, the undecided had really gone home or decided to blow their cover.

Around Netanyahu it was maintained even through the months of unremittingly bad polls, that the situation is much as it was on the eve of the Rabin assassination — a near tie. The polls were all off, it was estimated, because of the uncommonly high proportion of floaters.

Their theory was that these are really Likud supporters who were either swept by the post-assassination emotional tidal wave or

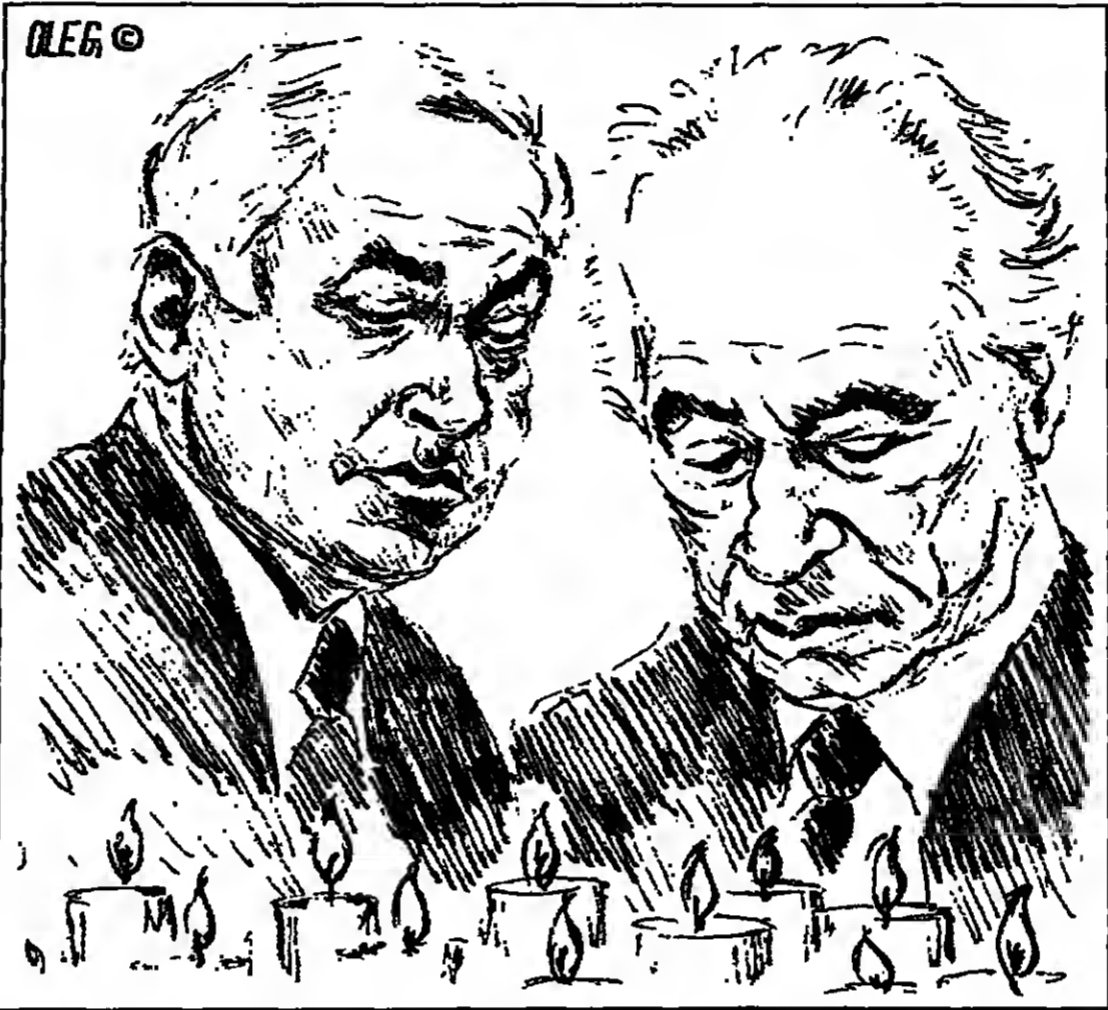
were reluctant to identify themselves in what they considered an intolerant political atmosphere.

Hence, the assessment in the Likud is that this week's terrorism merely returned people to reality. The Israeli public, according to this line of thinking, goes from shock to shock, from depression to depression. The oppressive influence of the Rabin assassination was still heavy in the air when elections were advanced. Memory of the terrorist savagery of earlier months was overshadowed by the assassination and dimmed by the relative recent calm — to no small extent due to plain bad luck for the terrorists.

"It isn't that the effect of the Rabin assassination was nullified," judges Hanegbi, "but that there is perhaps a return to a sense of proportion and the dreadful shattering of an illusory calm — so far as ordinary folk are concerned.

"As for the 'beautiful people,' I can't help wondering about the curious silence of those who were so vocal after the assassination. But when 25 innocents who hadn't hurt a fly are cut down, Avig Gefen doesn't sing, artists do not gather in vehemence, sentimental books are not published, ITV prepares no memorial cassettes, no medals are minted and no overpasses, hospitals or streets are named after the dead."

Does this mean that these non-celebrity victims will be eventually forgotten like those before them? Maybe. The shock of the past week may well fade and lose its electoral significance before the May 29 polling day. Nothing is certain in our volatile and turbulent arena, it is admitted in the Likud, though it is thought that this week's trauma just may mark a turning point which will bring the political balance back to a more undistorted and even keel.



... While Peres ponders ending open borders

PRIME Minister Shimon Peres's dream of European-style open borders between Israel and the territories could explode along with the suicide bombs that went off this week.

The last seven months — which saw no suicide bombings — led to an increase in the number of Palestinians working within the Green Line from 30,000 to 72,000, and the school of thought within the government favoring increased interaction between Israelis and Palestinians seemed to be gaining.

Yet, this week's bombing demonstrated that when push comes to shove, Peres's vision of close interaction instead of separation between Israel and the territories did not win many adherents in his own cabinet. Peres, who in previous times would have been the chief opponent, himself extended closure. Before he would have blanchered at his predecessor's policies of eliminating Palestinian jobs in favor of foreign labor. Now he approved the closure and this week his aides admitted the goal of open borders seemed more distant.

These were the first bombings since his becoming not just premier, but also defense minister, and Peres did not want to be seen as weak, especially three months before an election. Officials in the Prime Minister's Office this week suddenly seemed to speak of closure as if they were converts.

In an apparent effort to gather election ammunition, they were assembling press clippings of statements against closure made by former prime minister Yitzhak Shamir while he was in power,

fearing that it would resurrect the Green Line.

Inter-activists such as Minister in the Prime Minister's Office Yossi Beilin also did not press hard for it, illustrating that the position is losing ground. Now its only other advocates are Immigration Minister Yair Tzaban and Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni (both Meretz).

On the other side, two of the most senior ministers close to Peres were very vocal in calling for a tough line. Foreign Minister Ehad Barak and Interior Minister Haim Ramon. Not coincidentally, the two have top campaign functions, and met with Peres at his office the night of the bombings this week to discuss how this issue could effect the campaign.

"The public cares about personal security," Deputy Foreign Minister Eli Dayan said, echoing a refrain of several ministers who believe reducing or eliminating the number of Palestinian laborers working in Israel can best achieve this goal.

Barak and Ramon are joined by several ministers, most notably long-term advocate Education Minister Amnon Rubinstein (Meretz). Religious Affairs Minister Shimon Sbeiret, Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal — who has headed a commission on how to achieve separation — and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, who said before the bombings that the territories should be sealed off until after the elections and Israel should compensate the Palestinians accordingly.

There are three lines of argu-

Following the latest bombings, will the prime minister abandon his vision of a New Middle East? David Makovsky reports

ment driving the pro-separation forces. First, as Barak points out, there is at least circumstantial evidence that it is effective against terror. He says that there has only been one bombing (Hadera in May 1994) when closure was imposed. Therefore, closure should be part of the anti-terrorism strategy.

The full demands were posed by IDF Chief of Staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak to Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat at their meeting Tuesday night, which included a crackdown on Hamas and chasing down 13 individuals the IDF suspects are hardcore killers, sources say.

Shahak told one minister that privately he is convinced that Arafat knows Israel means business.

Second, apart from the security logic, there is a political logic to closure as it has popular appeal on both the left and right. It is the only time that Labor is able to outflank the Likud on the right, urging that Palestinians be kept on the other side of the fence.

Precisely for this reason, proponents say, it has educational value. Prolonged closure would make the Israeli public used to the notion that borders exist. The feeling is that the public cares less where the borders are, rather than the fact that they do in fact exist.

At Wednesday's closed-door inner cabinet meeting where it

was decided to step up security measures including more police on the seam of the Green Line, Barak made his case for extended closure and argued against those charging it was a pressure cooker which could prove counterproductive for Israeli security.

He cited poet Robert Frost who coined the phrase in his 1914 poem, Mending Wall, "good fences make good neighbors."

Barak said the following: "The closure has proven itself in the past. It is effective. We need to enforce it with punishment against Israeli employers who violate it [by bringing in Palestinian workers].

"There is no pressure cooker. There was a pressure cooker when 140,000 Palestinians worked here and the Palestinian economy were smaller. Now there are fewer workers and the Palestinian economy has now grown by a third. The eight-month closure starting in March 1993 reduced the dependence [on Palestinian labor].

"There is no alternative over time to separation. Nobody in Israel wants the alternatives to it: a binational state or apartheid or Bosnia here. This does mean that separation will be along a straight line, it will include Jordan Valley, Gush Etzion, Ma'aleh Adumim, up to Ariel.

"Separation will give us enhanced security, and allow past traumas to settle and enable [trade] cooperation to evolve

costs. If closure would be permanent, this would mean a shortfall of at least \$750 million per year. To put this in perspective, this amount is more than the 35 donor countries give annually to the PA.

Indeed, some European envoys have privately complained that the donors feel that they are offsetting the effects of the closures instead of having the money spent on infrastructure projects.

The upshot is that diplomats believe if Israel wants to stop bringing Palestinian labor, it should consider compensating the Authority or the individuals involved. Yet, Israel has not made an offer, and therefore closure can only be construed as collective punishment, they said.

The notion of closure leading to separation is gaining political ground in Israel, but it must be pointed out that it is startling that its definition has not crystallized in the three years since it was first imposed after a wave of stabblings. Three years and many closures later, it is still seen as merely reactive and an election hot-button issue, but not part of a

long-term policy.

For example, for two years, the Foreign Ministry has been issuing press statements about its plans to join the US and the Palestinians in supporting the establishment of labor-intensive industrial zones inside Palestinian areas instead of Israel, but so far nothing has happened. There have been major delays as it has been mired in bureaucracy, and ambitious plans have been scaled back due to fiscal problems.

Delays extend beyond the question of funding. After the Beit Lid bombing in January 1995, Shahal was appointed amid great fanfare to establish a commission on how to enhance separation. Yet those recommendations were ignored by the government and considered unworkable and costly.

Unless the school of thought favoring separation is able to put together a coherent position on how it can help make it happen, the notion will be seen as merely a reactive, election vote-grabber and not any more realistic than its perhaps idyllic alternative now being put on hold by Peres.

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Political morality
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The men of true mercy

Jessica Steinberg reports on the work of the haredi volunteer force that recovers human remains after terror attacks

In the aftermath of each bus bombing, we sit as a nation, eyes focused on television images, ears glued to radio broadcasts, listening and looking on in horror. We watch the police and rescue workers, faces struggling to remain impassive, as they carry out their terrible tasks of separating the living from the dead. In the background, the blackened skeleton of yet another bus, its empty seats and accordion pleats a potent reminder of how quickly tragedy can strike. And dispersed throughout the scene

are the black kippot and orange vests of the Hesed Shel Emet ("True mercy") volunteers, gathering the remains of those taken by the bomb's blast. These haredi men are fulfilling a holy act, a mitzva. Respect for the dead is one of the boldest imperatives incumbent upon the Jewish people. There is no greater deed than carrying out the rituals and customs pertaining to death. Yet whoever imagined that caring for the dead would translate into gathering body parts and skin fragments from trees and



(Top): Two volunteers gather remains at the site of the Jaffa Street attack. Above, Rabbi Gelbstein: This is what makes us a Jewish nation.



There's no time for feelings. You work like a robot. (Ariel Jerozolimski)

A gruesome task

Moshe Klein, a 46-year-old school principal, was about to complete his tour of army reserve duty as an officer when he joined Hesed Shel Emet. Since then, he's learned the art of removing his mind from the task at hand. "In these situations, there's no time for feelings," he says. "The heart is full, but the hands are busy. I climb on ladders and with my knife in hand, scrape off flesh and blood. You separate yourself from it, you work like a robot." When Klein went to the first basement meeting in 1989, they were shown films from various bombings, footage too shocking to be shown on television. Many participants didn't return after that, remarks Klein, for if they couldn't handle the film, how could they deal with the real thing? Klein says he doesn't generally talk about his work, although on Monday, the day following the No. 18 bombing, people commented on his demeanor. "That's unusual, because I'm a good actor, but it's difficult to hide this kind of stuff," he says. "At night, in bed, that's when you're alone with your thoughts and images. You try to run from your thoughts, but it's a constant replay in front of your eyes. You can attempt to get over it, but the heart is full." - J.S.

balconies? There's no question that this gruesome task, and exalted deed, is also the most difficult. "It's a holy act," says Rabbi Elazar Gelbstein, director of Hesed Shel Emet. "God created us in his image and we must do his deeds. This is our job. It's hard and it breaks us but it must be done." Gelbstein cuts an imposing figure, tall, with bushy gray eyebrows and a full beard. He sits at his desk, which is covered with papers and an overflowing ashtray, surrounded by stacks of files, a computer and constant interruptions from his assistants. Yet he speaks in gentle tones, and his eyes are red-rimmed as he recalls his experiences. "I remember after the 405 [Jerusalem-Tel Aviv] bus attack in 1989, I didn't talk at home for a few days," he comments, pausing for control. "When a reporter on the scene asked me how I was doing, I started crying and continued for 10 minutes. It was probably better that he asked me, rather than holding it inside." The 405 bus attack in the summer of 1989 was a turning point in the formation of Hesed Shel Emet. Originally, the task of gathering body remains had fallen to the police and other rescue organizations. That fall, the municipality turned to Gelbstein, who was active in the Jerusalem Hevra Kadisha (one of the community organizations that tend to the rituals of death) and asked him to help organize a society that would teach volunteers how to undertake the task. At the first meeting, relates Gelbstein, there were 20 or 30 people. He found them by word of mouth and through ads placed in the neighborhood newspapers. About a third came back after the first meeting, with two-thirds lost to scheduling conflicts and an understandable discomfort or fear with the job at hand. The group grew slowly over the course of a year, attending classes taught by the police, army personnel, medical staff and rabbis. The 180 volunteers are all haredim, some of whom have served in the army, as well as pacifists of varying stripes, from pro-settlement to anti-settlement. As Gelbstein comments, there was a need to find what unified them. The point was, each man

had a heart, and would be doing this to help others, regardless of his political viewpoints. "We started learning, building a Torah of information on the subject," says Gelbstein. "How, why, how many... how to find it, carry it. What are the guidelines, how to gather everything and get it to the right places. "How to list, photograph, who took it, where did they take it to. We did all kinds of exercises, using dolls, watching films - practice runs at the airport, at the railway station. They taught a course in Bnei Brak, at the request of Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau and now there are Hesed Shel Emet outlets in several cities, although Gelbstein would like to see them all united under one umbrella organization. At the No. 5 bombing on Dizengoff, the Jerusalem men worked side by side with those from Bnei Brak, some of them arriving on the scene after hearing the news on the radio. One of the requirements is that the volunteers themselves be married. The philosophy is that an unmarried male is, first and foremost, tied to his studies in the yeshiva, and not mature or responsible enough to deal with the situation. They come from a variety of occupations - rabbis, teachers, a doctor, lawyers, shopkeepers and retirees. Most of the volunteers carry their own beepers or cellular phones and Gelbstein uses these to help contact everyone. He laments the inevitably inefficient logistics of the system. Many times he simply grabs the vests and runs to the site where the others are already waiting. "We basically pick up the phones, if there's time," he explains. "But often, there's not. With Sunday's bombing, I heard about it at 7 a.m., and there wasn't one person who hadn't heard about it." When their work is done, the group tries to talk about the experience although they rarely find the time. As Gelbstein says, it's hard and they are well aware of their goals. "This is what makes us a Jewish nation, this type of experience that doesn't differentiate between us," he emphasizes. "We do it from our heart and soul. It's a hard hesed, a difficult deed, but we must overcome it because God gave us the strength."

Coping with fear

People who witness terrible events may need as much help in recovering as the injured, psychologists tell Margot Dudkevitch

Fear is a healthy reaction, a warning signal against danger, says Rina Levy, deputy director of the Jerusalem Municipality's Psychological and Educational Services.

However, when horrendous incidents such as Sunday's bomb attacks occur, not everyone has the strength or ability to deal with their emotions, Levy says. "People who walked by and saw the wreckage of the bus and bodies strewn sometimes can go into shock or become paralyzed or rooted to the spot."

According to Levy, others try to dismiss the horror and continue in a "business-as-usual attitude," blocking out the horrors or ignoring them. Both, says Levy, are extreme examples of the way people react in such situations.

"It's like having the carpet swept out from under your feet and the feeling of losing complete control," says Dr. Bernie Stein, chief psychologist at the Education Ministry.

Two of the main reactions people suffer from in traumatic situations are the feelings of helplessness, the difficulty in coping when witnessing such an event, and the sudden and acute disruption of all of one's expectations from life, says Dr. Danny Brom, clinical psychologist and research coordinator for Amcha (the national center for psychological support of survivors of the Holocaust and the second generation).

"People witnessing such a shocking event often have to go through the same coping process as people who were actually injured in the blast," he says.

Post-traumatic stress disorder applies to both categories, says Brom, adding that people often reenact the scene in their minds over and over again, while others may become obsessed with talking excessively or suffer from recurring dreams that cause them to stay awake in order to blot out the pictures they see in their minds. All of these symptoms, Brom stresses, are perfectly normal.

The media also play a role, says Levy. Reading a newspaper can trigger off emotions, but watching television footage can have a far more shocking effect, she says. "Every day people are killed in road accidents but we still cross the roads and continue driving. However, when a bus transporting children to school crashes the whole nation is devastated."



Expressions of loss, shock, grief: (From top) A woman lights a memorial flame for a family member who died in the November 1994 Dizengoff bombing; a passerby at the scene of the Ramot Eshkol attack last August clings to her strength, a prayer book; a woman mourns for a Dizengoff victim. (Brian Henders Ariel Jerozolimski; Israel Sun)

DIFFERENT age groups deal with anxiety in different ways, says Levy, adding that young children need to feel secure and parents should encourage them to talk about their fears. Teachers and classroom friends tend to take over that role in school-age kids, and teenagers tend to turn to their peers. Adults express their feelings by talking to their spouses or even a fellow passenger on the bus. The main thing is to find a way to vent the feelings inside you, if not in words then perhaps by drawing, she says. "We advised Vladimir Kushnir's relatives to allow him to attend his parents' funeral," says Levy, stressing the importance for a child that age to participate. "Watching his parents' bod-

ies lowered into the ground is something concrete and helps the child to come to terms with reality and enables him to mourn." According to Brom, children have a tendency to turn a traumatic situation into a basic reality, and can suffer difficulties in trying to adapt to another reality. Parents, says Levy, often pass on their own fears to their children without realizing it, instead of guiding the child and helping him to cope. Brom and Levy both stressed the importance of allowing children to watch the television after such a tragedy occurs. By sending children to their rooms while they [parents] continue watching television, parents are teaching their children to become more secretive, says

Levy. "A child may feel he is being punished if he is sent to his room as his parents watch television. A parent should accompany him and sit with him and not leave him alone," she notes. Stein says "talk, tears and time" are all part of the normal process in releasing pent-up emotions. The public should be encouraged to come forward and seek advice and not try to overcome their feelings on their own, he says. All the psychologists agreed that the traditional Jewish mourning process, the shiva and shloshim, enable people to come to terms with death in a healthy manner. They also stressed the importance of seeking professional advice if a person feels he is unable to cope.

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Ex-Syrian envoy: Assad doesn't deal

SYRIAN President Hafez Assad might not want to meet with Israelis. But Zubeir Diab is one prominent Syrian who has no problem meeting with Israeli officials and academics.

The 57-year-old Diab is about as authentic a product of the Assad regime as you can find. For decades, he served the ruling powers in Damascus. For 12 years he was a functionary in the ruling Baath Party. He also served as a newspaper editor and a member of the security forces.

But his focus has been on Israel. "I have been a student of Israeli politics for the last 25 years," Diab says in a telephone interview from his home in London. "I am in the peace camp of the Labor Party and Meretz. The welfare of Israel depends on living in peace with the Arabs."

Diab's last post in the regime was as a diplomat at the Syrian Embassy in London. In 1985 he was refused a promotion and decided to remain in Britain, where he eventually became a citizen. He has not returned to Damascus for several years but his wife resides in the Syrian capital and he remains in close touch with the regime.

"I criticize them but they forgive me," he says.

Since 1992, Diab has been in an academic dialogue with Israelis. They have included those close to both the Labor and Likud parties, including *Ha'aretz* military commentator Ze'ev Schiff, Joseph Alpher, Dore Gold, Moshe Maoz and Aharon Levran.

Last year, he participated in a conference hosted by Bar-Ilan University's BESA Center for Strategic Studies. He has, however, refused several other invitations to visit Israel.

Most of his Israeli interlocutors have fond memories of Diab. But despite his frank criticism of the Syrian regime, the Israelis are convinced that he faithfully represents its positions.

"He thinks he represents the Baathists better than they do in Damascus," Levran, a former researcher at Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies says.

For his part, Diab is amused by what he terms the Israeli misunderstanding of Assad, particularly that of Prime Minister Shimon Peres. Assad, Diab says, wants peace, but does not share the prime minister's vision of a new Middle East without borders.

The first misunderstanding, Diab says, concerns Assad's negotiating style. In short, he says, the Syrian president doesn't negotiate.

"When Assad gives a concession which is procedural, it is to make the Americans happy," he says. "But it is misinterpreted by

Former diplomat Zubeir Diab says Israelis misunderstand the country's leader, Steve Rodan reports

Israeli decision-makers who think they can press for more. The more you press Assad the more he'll resist."

Bernard Lewis, the renowned American historian who has taught at Princeton University and London University, agrees.

"The Israeli demand for normalization is either unreasonable or illogical," he said in an address this week in Jerusalem sponsored by the B'nai B'rith World Center. "Normalization demands being normal. What is normal for Syria? Asking for open borders with Syria is not normalized relations. It's privileged relations. Asking for normal relations is totally unrealistic. If the Israelis get it, everybody will ask for it."

ISRAELI diplomatic sources following the talks say Assad has gone back on every one of the understandings he reached with Israel over the past eight months. It was this, they say, that brought Peres to the realization that early Israeli elections would not affect negotiations.

"As we see it, Assad can easily wait another year regardless of when we schedule elections," one diplomatic source says.

Diab says Assad has not made any promises he can't keep. Take Israel's demands for normalization with Syria which, Diab says, Assad has accepted in principle.

"The problem is the timing and how it is done," he says. "If Assad goes too fast, he tells his power bases that he is like Sadat or Mubarak. I know this is difficult for Israelis to accept. I tell the Israelis that they don't want to see you now in Damascus."

Assad's power bases, Diab says, are primarily the army and the security services. They will end up determining Assad's successor, which he hopes will be his son Bashar, a prospect Diab considers unlikely.

With 12 divisions, the Syrians have a huge military and there are divergent alliances within them. But the security forces are united by their deep hostility toward Israel.

"The whole esprit de corps in the army is Palestine," Diab says. "You can't say everything

will get better and we'll all love each other. It won't work in Syria."

Assad's other power base is the Baath Party. Diab says about 500,000 Baath functionaries control every level of Syrian bureaucracy, and they too, are united by a hatred of Zionism.

"They will immediately brand Assad as a traitor," Diab says, referring to normalization with Israel. "In all Baath resolutions, there is not one mention of normalization."

"Most of the Israelis I have spoken to think Assad is a dictator who can order anything he wants," Diab says. "Their optimism is misplaced if they think because Egypt agreed to normalization and Jordan agreed, the Syrians will as well. The Syrians are very arrogant. In their eyes, the Egyptians and Jordanians are all traitors."

Diab says after the Cairo declaration last year the Syrian military leadership urged Assad to slow down his rapprochement toward Israel. Assad apparently agreed and is using the Israeli elections to improve his negotiating posture.

But time will not change Assad's positions, Diab says. One area is borders - despite Assad's awareness that the difference between the Israeli and Syrian position on a full withdrawal from the Golan amounts to only several hundred meters.

Arms reduction is another area that Syria will not even consider, despite Peres's call for a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction.

"There won't be arms control in the next generation," Diab says. "Anybody who talks about arms control in the Middle East is a yo-yo."

So what is Assad offering Israel?

"He can offer right now non-belligerency, recognition and respect for territorial integrity," Diab says. "This is what he calls objective requirements of peace - if you declare that you will go back to the 1967 lines. But if you want an embassy tomorrow, that's out of the question."

So, Assad will continue with the peace process without conceding anything of substance, Diab says. Despite Washington's decision to keep Syria on the list of nations that sponsor terrorism, Assad has high hopes that the US will eventually help Damascus both politically and financially while persuading Israel that Assad's current offer is the best it will obtain.

"Peres thinks he can get away with not returning to the 1967 lines," Diab says. "Assad has put his credibility on this. The only thing is that Assad thinks that the Americans will deliver in the end. He says that Clinton is a very good guy but the [American] system is pro-Zionist."



'Don't underestimate Saddam'

Iraq expert Amatzia Baram tells Michael Widlanski that the dictator still is a threat to Israel and Jordan

SADDAM Hussein's revenge this week against his two "traitorous" sons-in-law, who had revealed secrets of Iraq's weapons programs, caused many here to worry that this was not the end of the matter but the beginning of another Saddamian attack plan.

Because defectors Hussein Kamel and Saddam Kamel Hassan had been sheltered by Jordan, analysts said, it was likely that Saddam would now try to exact revenge on those who had hosted the men or benefited from their information: Jordan, Israel and the US.

After last week's execution, an Iraqi King Hussein said that he would help Iraqi rebels try to

unseat Saddam, and the Jordanian monarch even welcomed a small splinter group to set up a base in Amman.

"I am pretty sure that what happened was preplanned," declared Prime Minister Abdel-Karim Kabariti, who, along with King Hussein, denounced Saddam in the strongest terms.

Some American and Israeli analysts said that Saddam might then try to destabilize Jordan across their common border or even to contribute to acts of terrorism and assassination.

If that happened, they said, Israel, which defended Jordan from Syrian threats in 1970, might then find itself in a confrontation with Saddam again.

What would this mean for Israel: more terror, aid to Hamas or even the launching of Scuds?

One of Israel's top experts on Iraq, Prof. Amatzia Baram, said in an interview this week with the *Post* that he thought the fears were exaggerated, although it was best not to underestimate Saddam's abilities or his hatreds.

"IT DOESN'T endanger the king, but it all depends what the king does," said Baram, chairman of the Middle Eastern history department at Haifa University.

"If [King Hussein] plays it cool and it does not escalate, then Saddam got everything he wants [the execution of his defectors],

and he doesn't want anything from King Hussein.

"You have to be careful about not provoking Saddam too much. If I were in the king's shoes, I would have said the same thing. I think the king had to say what he said."

Going beyond the harsh rhetoric and organizing activities against Saddam would be a different order of "provocation" in the eyes of the sadistic Iraqi dictator.

"Still, Saddam needs the king a lot more than the king needs him," said Baram, noting Saddam's pragmatic analysis would have to include the fact that 80% of Iraq's foreign currency comes via Jordan, which purchases 70,000 barrels per day of oil.

This was about 80% of Iraqi petroleum production, and an Iraqi-Jordanian crisis would necessarily mean that Saddam was "cutting off his nose to spite his face."

"Of course it's mutual dependence, but it's clear who needs more," said Baram.

"Remember, every time an Iraqi diplomat goes abroad, he has to go via Jordan. Their whole link with the outside world is through Jordan. That's very important for the Iraqi elite."

"JORDAN," BARAM continued, "needs to sell industrial products to Iraq. About 70% of Jordan's industrial output is sold to Iraq."

That's worth about \$250 million to \$300m."

Baram warned that King Hussein should be careful about his encouragement of Iraqi opposition groups.

"The King has now allowed an opposition group to be positioned on Jordanian territory; that's a limited declaration of war."

Baram said King Hussein would probably not have been so bold if he had not been assured US and Israeli protection.

He said open Iraqi-Jordanian border strife was not likely, but assassination attempts could not be ruled out if the king continued to escalate anti-Saddam policies.

"The risk right now is limited," he said.

Should Israelis worry? "We cannot defend the King against assassins and demonstrations, but we can defend him against Iraqi attacks. I think he counts on us a lot."

"I think the danger of Scuds is very slight, and [Iraq] would pay a very heavy price, although there is no sure thing in this area."

"The UN knows that [Saddam] has six missiles. He may have a few more, but they're rusty. He still has some decent some missiles and some planes."

"Our Defense Ministry does not believe he has any missile launchers, but I say he may still have the ability to produce them," cautioned Baram.

Asked about the fate of the two senior Iraqi defectors - about which there is some mystery - Baram said: "It's very likely that the moment they crossed the border they were apprehended and interrogated, and [Saddam] was there, and then he concocted this story about their family killing them."

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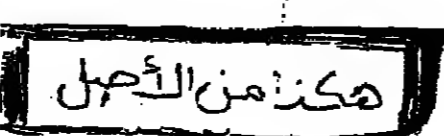
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Eilat hasn't quite made up its mind yet

A street survey of Eilat residents finds them as undecided as the rest of the nation on how to vote, Abraham Rabinovich writes

WITH the perspective provided by distance from the rest of Israel and a virtually extra-territorial mindset, residents of Eilat looking toward the upcoming elections present a clear picture — of confusion.

"Every day people who have supported Likud and Tsomet are seesawing," says the man behind the counter to the Jerusalem Souvenir shop, who prefers to remain nameless. "Every day people change their minds, especially if there are terrorist acts like this week."

Almost all of the dozen Eilat buttonholed in a random survey said they had not yet decided for whom to vote even though they all expressed strong political opinions. Despite the seeming ambiguity, however, the impression that emerges from this traditionally Likud-leaning outpost is that the parameters of the political debate in Israel have shifted markedly leftward. Almost all the normally right-wing voters inter-

viewed had clearly internalized the peace process and come to accept it not only as unavoidable but desirable. The seesawing is not about whether the process should go forward, but about which of the major parties should be entrusted with the task.

'We all used to be more right wing because the situation was different... Even the left was more right.'

views since the murder of Yitzhak Rabin. That doesn't mean I'm going to vote Labor. I still don't know how I'm going to vote. Both the right and left want peace. There's no other way. We were in a situation where we had a

war every 10 years and we had to put an end to that. It's only a matter of which road to take.

The peace arrived at with Jordan is significant for Asean. "I was born in Eilat and I always wondered what Eilat would look like from Agaba. Now I've been there and seen it." Peace with the Palestinians, he understands, will almost certainly be less idyllic. "I don't believe we'll have real peace with the Palestinians but I want to give it a chance."

Romy David, a saleswoman in a bakery, says she had intended to vote for Likud until the murder of Rabin. "That was the most disgusting thing that ever happened in this country." She will not vote for Likud's Binyamin Netanyahu, she says. "because I don't think he wants peace." While true peace with the Palestinians is unlikely,

she says, "anything is better than war." However, she won't decide for whom to vote until close to election day. "I want to hear what everyone has to say."

The bakery owner, Robi Vishniak, was a Tsomet voter like every Eilat citizen before the past two years. "We all used to be more right wing because the situation was different," he says. "Even the left was more right."

He says he would have voted this time for Rabin, but finds it difficult to vote for Shimoon Peres. "He's not credible." As for Netanyahu, "he's not ripe." In the end, though, he will have to make a choice between the two. "It's the man that's important, not the platform."

Dilemma is not only the province of the right-wing. Noam,

a solid-looking citizen in his forties who declined to otherwise be identified, says he has always voted Labor but is not sure how he will vote this time. "I'm debating between the peace process and security. We've got to move forward in the process but in a more deliberate way. I think we're running too fast. We must pause at every step and examine how the Palestinians are honoring their commitments before we take the next step. We're not doing that." Might he vote this time for Likud? "It's reasonable to assume that I won't vote for the right but I don't know."

"Whatever Rabbi Ovadia says, we will do," he says of Shas leader Ovadia Yosef. What about his own political views? "I don't want a Palestinian state but I'm willing to give up the West Bank for peace," says Ben-Lulu, who heads a Shas yeshiva in Eilat. "I'm against coming down from the Golan because that will only bring war closer."

Cohen. "We are all the time reacting to events. We never decide what kind of state we want, what borders, what are our war aims. I don't care if they decide that half the country will go to the Jews, or that the Palestinians get three-quarters or that the Jews get it all. But decide and be tough about it."

Cohen, 62, says he has always voted for the right. "The problem is that none of the right-wing parties now have my trust."

"I'm for peace but at the cheapest price we can get it," says Cohen, as he gives change to three tourists. "The right will make peace too but maybe for a cheaper price." The problem, he says, is that people are interested only in obtaining "villas and Mitsubishis" and the country no longer interests them. "That's why the Arabs are screwing us because they do want a state." As his interlocutor descended from the bus Cohen shouted an encouraging farewell. "The Arabs will also be wanting villas and Mitsubishis."

HEADING NORTH from the Taba crossing point on the

'Every day people change their minds, especially if there are terrorist acts like this week.'

Egyptian border, local Egged bus driver Yitzhak Cohen is engaged in political grousing with one of the passengers behind him, apparently a long-time acquaintance. "First of all, the state of Israel has to decide what it wants," says

Will this be the shortest bridge ever built?

THE WEEK THAT WAS MICHAL YUDELMAN

FEW believed it could last. That subdued air of unity maintained by both coalition and opposition immediately after the devastating terrorist attacks would surely give way to renewed campaign hostilities.

Noetheless, politicians from both sides admitted that the atmosphere of unity, no matter how frail or contrived, did help to maintain some national sanity while the bereaved mourned and the rest of the country avoided quarrels and street brawls.

As the thinking by Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu, with support from Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert, for the most part kept politics out of the tragedy, winning Bibi rare praise from coalition leaders and some points in the public opinion polls.

Knesset members on both sides noted that Bibi's order to his people to hold fire against the government during the funerals, not to hold demonstrations and not to disturb Prime Minister Shimoon Peres's Knesset speech, had the desired effect.

Abandoning his former practice of shooting from the hip at any available television camera, Bibi emerged dignified and statesman-like. And Peres was in general spared the kind of enraged onslaughts we had seen after past terror attacks.

The public too got the message and their mature reaction was more like that of the people of London or Paris facing terrorist attack than we are used to seeing in Israel.

Equally important, the leaders' responsible behavior instantly deflated the sails of would-be rabble-rousers.

Some were there as usual, even before the bodies were removed, screaming hatred and incitement. But this time, it just never got off the ground.

That day Bibi arrived at Metzdan Ze'ev in the same car as MK Dan Meridor. Likud wags explained this had a moderating effect on him.



David Levy: Off to the huppa with Bibi? (Media Images)

MATCHMAKER. Up to this week suggestions that David Levy might return to the Likud would raise only scoffs and derision in both camps.

Levy's people said, why should he, if he can run his own party and then become a minister in either a Labor or a Likud coalition on his own terms. How could he commit to the Likud after so recently saying it has no ideology, no alternative and no heritage?

Then there is Levy's personal hostility to Bibi — a much stronger factor than any ideological differences. The two simply could not work together, right?

On Bibi's side, the cooptment was hardly any less. Those in the know said he had absolutely no intention of enticing the quarrelsome Levy back to Likud — not after all the trouble he had getting rid of him.

Bibi had also called Levy "a Likud senior surrounded by a criminal gang" during the "sizzling cassette" affair and continues to see him mainly as a nuisance. If allowed to return to Likud, there would be no end to his demands.

Besides, Bibi was not at all fazed by the two or three mandates he might lose to Levy — his pollsters predicted no more than that — since he hoped to replace them by the same number from the ethnic Russians.

Yet this week the experts were confounded by swirling rumors that Bibi was intensely wooing Levy via the good offices of that renowned matchmaker Aris Sharon.

All had changed. No price was too great. Number two on the Likud list, David? No problem. Seveo reserved Knesset slots? Sure, Dave. Foreign minister in my next government? For you, my boy, why not? Anything else? Just come it. My door is always open.

So it's Levy and Bibi for the buppa; purr wedding lovers. Just as soon as the terms of the ketuba are set. Er, could we have that in writing, please?

POLL POWER

So what could have changed Levy's mind just days after launching his new party?

Geshet (bridge)? Bridge to Bibi? What happened to all that lofty Bridge between rich and poor, religious and secular, left and right, etc., etc., which Levy said last week is absolutely crucial to Israeli society?

All gone — a footnote, perhaps, in the Guinness Book of Records as the shortest bridge ever built. In that final analysis, so dear to a politician's heart, seven Knesset seats in the hand are worth 10 in the bush.

Then there are the daydreams — foreign minister again, triumphant return to Likud as a winner, Bibi on his knees. No sunrise of burning ideology over a new bridge could match such a warm glow.

On the day of the terrorist attacks in Jerusalem and Ashkelon, instant polls indicated a dramatic surge in Bibi's direction. Now if the polls indeed showed Bibi running neck and neck with Peres, and Levy's joining Likud would boost Bibi even further, that is a difference that casts a new light on everything.

And for Bibi, a pact with Levy would remove the last obstacle to a one-round showdown against Peres for prime minister, not to mention strengthening both the Likud and his status with Likudniks.

There remains only the small matter of rumbles and grumbles in the Likud.

Slot number two for Levy and seven realistic places on the Likud list leaves incumbent Likud MKs — who have already been nudged down the list to accommodate Rafal and the seven Tsomet dwarfs — only 25 realistic places.

"If you want to be prime minister, this is the price," Sharon told Bibi.

Maybe one small price for a Bibi, but one giant leap into oblivion for many loyal Likudniks.

Then there are Tsomet's strong objections to making changes in a done deal — reshuffling its placements to make room for Levy's lot.

Rafal thinks he has made enough sacrifices — he abandoned his bid for prime minister and slipped down from number two to three on the list.

Does anyone hear a cry of "enough already"?

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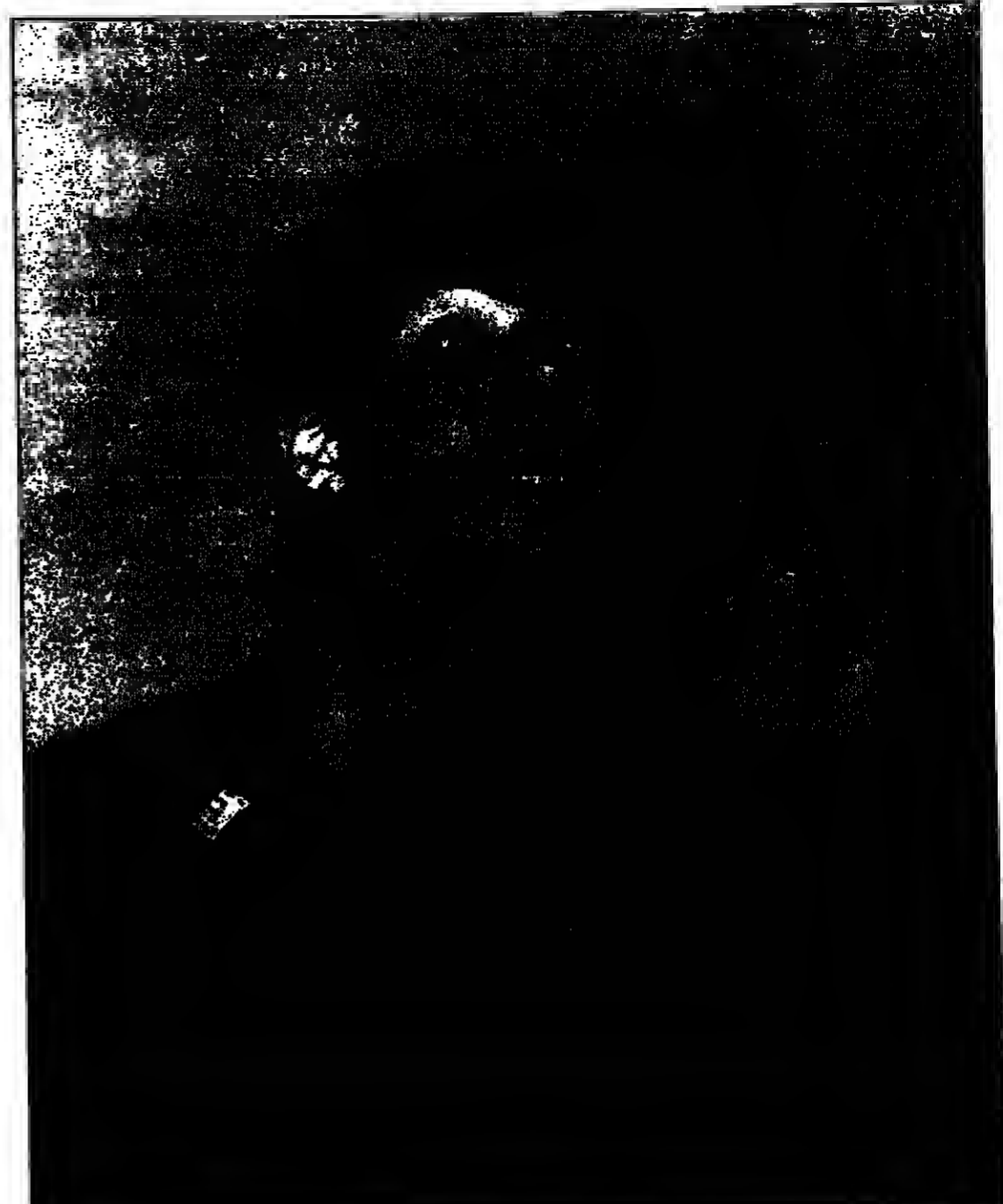
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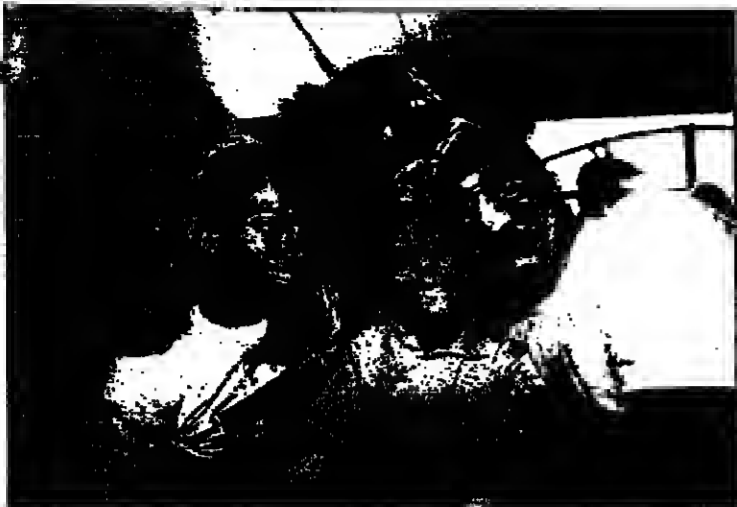
UNION AMERICANS

A brotherly act on stage and off

Down's syndrome sufferer Dekel Shikartzi was once rejected by his brother. Now playing themselves onstage, they are reunited, Ori Golan writes



Dekel during a performance asks the audience: Look me in the eyes - even if they are squint - and tell me: Can you accept me as I am? (Below) With brother and fellow performer Ofer.



Model Michaela Bercu and comedian Tuva Tsafir entertain a patient at Schneider Children's Medical Center. (Sivan Farag)

An early Purim for patients

GRAPEVINE GREER FAY CASHMAN

PATIENTS AT Schneider Children's Medical Center in Petah Tikva started Purim early when members of Yeladim Shelanu (Our Children), a voluntary fundraising organization in conjunction with Toys 'R' Us toured the wards distributing Purim gifts, masks and clowns' hats. The group included comedy star Tuva Tsafir, top model Michaela Bercu and Leon Koffler, who is the Toys 'R' Us representative in Israel. Koffler, who was reluctant to don a mask, was finally persuaded by Bercu, but she did not have to employ the steamy kiss she plants on the elevator operator in the chewing-gum commercial. Koffler, by the way, promised to establish a toys and games room on every floor of the center.

the Knesset on Wednesday in honor of International Women's Day (March 8) at the invitation of the Knesset Committee for the Advancement of the Status of Women. One, Nadia Hilou, declared that she's entitled to double equality as both a woman and an Arab. "I want to be the first Arab woman in the Knesset," said the attractive mother of four who holds a master's degree in social work. She is a member of the directorate of the Tel Aviv Foundation and was the first Arab admitted to the Geographic Center, which conducts public opinion surveys, among other things. Knesset Speaker Shevah Weiss, who took time out of the plenum to greet the women, was in somewhat of a dilemma. "If I encourage more women to run for the Knesset, then fewer men will get in. If I'm not elected," he said, "I'll return to academia and I'll support you from there."

THE Coalition of Women's Organizations, which runs a very efficient telephone network when it wants to boost attendance at its functions, seems to be less resourceful when notifying invitees than plans have changed. "A symposium organized this week to enable nine women running for slots on Labor, Meretz, Likud and National Religious Party tickets to talk to women about issues that transcend party differences, was canceled out of respect for the victims of Sunday's terrorist bombing. Several women who received their invitations as late as the day of the event turned up after making last-minute changes in plan only to find a handwritten notice on the door announcing the cancellation. The consensus was that the program should not have been called off and that Dalia Itzik, Yael Aron, Esther Bitan, Debbie Ben-Ami, Naomi Chazan, Geula Cohen, Yael Amishav, Viva Sivan and Michal Shochat had all missed an important opportunity to make a joint decision on how to deal with national tragedies and help families of victims of terrorism.

THE NEXT government, regardless of who heads it, will be limited to 18 ministers. Labor MK Yael Dayan urged that women should not co-opt themselves with only one token minister. "Let's go for as many as possible," she said, acknowledging that aiming for 50% of the ministerial portfolios might be too high, but stressing that 10% was too low. Meretz MK Naomi Chazan dreamed out loud of the day when the defense portfolio would be given to a woman.

BRIGHTER NEWS on the women's front is that Yael Shaliteil of Kibbutz Nevech Or has created a ripple in male-dominated district councils by becoming the first woman to be elected to head a district council. A widow and mother of two, Shaliteil, 50, is the new chairwoman of the Beit She'an Valley District Council whose jurisdiction extends to 23 moshavim and kibbutzim.

EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR Mohamed Bassiony this week led a 30-member delegation of Egyptian businessmen to Ashdod to look at trade and joint-venture opportunities. Ashdod is of particular significance to Egyptians not only because it is a port city but because it has a monument to fallen Egyptian soldiers.

HE walks onto the stage and introduces himself: "Hello, my name is Dekel Shikartzi," he says in slow, articulated speech, "and I was born with Down's syndrome. I am an actor, singer and painter. And I am also Ofer's brother." And so begins the two-man play portraying the intricate relationship between two brothers. Ofer, a 35-year-old professional actor and dancer, and Dekel, his 21-year-old brother. It is a dialogue between two brothers who grew up in the same house, yet only got to know each other years later. "Dekel was born when I was 14 years old," Ofer begins. "For over six years I had no contact with him at all. I shut him off from my life. We lived in the same house, but in different spheres. He lived in one end of the house and I in the other." He looks at his brother and says, "I so much wanted you to be like everyone else. Today I accept you and love you as you are." He kisses his younger brother. "My brother didn't know that he had a brother with feelings. A brother made of flesh and blood," retorts Dekel admiringly. Through their dialogues, the two brothers take the audience on an emotional whirlpool, with sentiments oscillating from humor to heartache, as they confront one another and talk candidly about their feelings toward each other, toward their family, and toward society at large.

OFFSTAGE, Ofer says: "The irony with Dekel is that, although he has inherited a genetic defect, he has also inherited our family's artistic genes. I think that he is a genuinely gifted actor and poet. And I believe this comes across in our play. As for his singing... I think he sings like a frog." Both brothers laugh. "But I am also an artist," Dekel reminds him. "Five years ago, during the Gulf war," Dekel recounts, "I entered a national painting competition on the theme of sealed rooms sponsored by Ma'ariv newspaper and I came second. Meni Pe'er, who hosted the evening in which the prizes were distributed, called out the names of the three runners-up, and asked them to come and collect their prizes. When my name was called out and I approached him, he looked at me, speechless. He was shocked. I had to say to him: 'Yes. I have Down's syndrome.'" As the play develops, the conversation between the brothers veers toward family life. Dekel talks to Ofer of his quest for female companionship, and Ofer recalls feeling overshadowed by Shahar, their other brother, a brilliant actor and musician, whom he idolized and even followed when Shahar became religious.

FORMER EILAT mayor Raffi Hochman could not breathe easy until this week when the Supreme Court upheld his 1993 acquittal on charge of bribery, fraud and violation of public trust. The state appealed the Beersheva District Court decision... and lost. The popular and dynamic Hochman, who believes he was the victim of a witch-hunt, has not decided whether to run again for public office. But he may yield to pressure from Eilat's who want to see him back in the driver's seat.

with him. He turns to the audience: "Look me in the eyes - even if they are squint - and tell me: Can you accept me as I am?" He speaks with a heavy lisp and an occasional stammer. "Will you ever stop looking skywards whenever I pass you by? Will you ever cease talking to, or about, me in the third person as though I don't understand or exist?" Total silence falls on the audience. You can hear a pin drop. "Don't forget that if you had one chromosome too many, you would also be like me." "The irony with Dekel is that, although he has inherited a genetic defect, he has also inherited our family's artistic genes. I think that he is a genuinely gifted actor and poet. And I believe this comes across in our play. As for his singing... I think he sings like a frog." Both brothers laugh. "But I am also an artist," Dekel reminds him. "Five years ago, during the Gulf war," Dekel recounts, "I entered a national painting competition on the theme of sealed rooms sponsored by Ma'ariv newspaper and I came second. Meni Pe'er, who hosted the evening in which the prizes were distributed, called out the names of the three runners-up, and asked them to come and collect their prizes. When my name was called out and I approached him, he looked at me, speechless. He was shocked. I had to say to him: 'Yes. I have Down's syndrome.'" As the play develops, the conversation between the brothers veers toward family life. Dekel talks to Ofer of his quest for female companionship, and Ofer recalls feeling overshadowed by Shahar, their other brother, a brilliant actor and musician, whom he idolized and even followed when Shahar became religious.

He who is different is made of flesh and blood. He who is different, with God's help, also has a mother. A mother who knows how to love. A mother who has a heart of gold. A mother who will not desert us. Because we, who are different, we are human beings. We are just like anyone else, made of flesh and blood.

AT THE end of their performance, Dekel and Ofer give the members of the audience a chance to ask questions and share their views and impressions. "Their reactions can often be very moving and can even serve as one of the highlights of the performance," says Ofer. "We once performed in front of a group of high-school pupils. At the end of the show, a young man got up and as he was about to speak, he broke down crying. He said that he had a sister who has Down's syndrome and until then he had kept it a secret because he was ashamed of her. He now wanted his friends to meet her." Dekel says he would never have come this far without the support of his parents. Indeed, their mother is usually present at their performances and hopes to accompany them on their upcoming tour abroad. Dekel also often forges special relationships with his audience. "We

once performed in front of an audience of kids who had been abandoned by their parents and afterwards many of them became my friends. They need a lot of love. There are a lot of people who need to be loved. And I have a lot of love to give." At the Other End of the House was written by playwright Bella Altman-Hadas and directed by Ravi Langlieb-Ziv. Ofer and Dekel Shikartzi are currently working on an English version of the play, which they intend to perform in the US and in Britain. The first performance in English is due to be staged at ZOA House, Tel Aviv, at the end of March.


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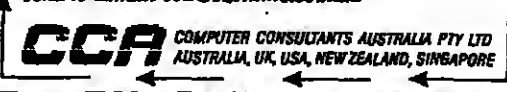
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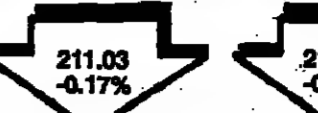
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הכרזה מן האתר

Market down on 'weak' Teva

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

ROBERT DANIEL



Two-Sided index

Maof index

THE TASE rose for the week as the Bank of Israel announced it would leave interest rates unchanged and as Bezeq reported rising profits.

traded, NIS 12.5m. above Wednesday's level and about NIS 10m. above this week's trading level.

Yesterday, share prices fell after Teva Pharmaceuticals Ltd. said fourth-quarter profit before a one-time write-off rose 25 percent, in line with expectations.

"The week was positive," said Hoffman. "We saw earnings reports that were good, including Bezeq."

Teva's results had initially been reported to the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange without an explanation of the one-time charge, said Zvi Hoffman, manager of mutual funds at Tel Aviv investment firm Meltav Ltd. As a result, he said, "Teva's announcement was seen worse than expected."

Next week he expects rising prices in Tel Aviv. "If there are no surprises in New York, if Wall Street will fall sharply, that will influence Tel Aviv."

The TASE halted trading in Teva's shares twice, once because of the earnings announcement (a standard exchange procedure) and once because of the lack of clarity regarding the figures.

Company earnings reports next week are expected to show rising profits, said Hoffman.

Teva, the most active share on the exchange yesterday, closed down 0.5 percent, a "weakness" which could have resulted from confusion over the trading halt, said Hoffman. Teva's American Depository Receipts rose 1/4 to 43 1/4 in New York in early trading.

He added that Bank of Israel's decision on Monday to leave the rate at which it lends to the banks unchanged at 14 percent contributed to gaining share prices in the week.

Yesterday, the Maof Index fell 0.32% to 219.63. The Two-Sided Index fell 0.17% to 211.03.

"The rate decision was expected, but it strengthened the idea that there might be a rate cut in the future," he said.

For the week, the Maof Index rose 1.3% and the Mishtanin Index rose 1.2%. Of 990 issues trading across the exchange yesterday, seven shares rose for every five that fell. Some NIS 90.9 million worth of shares

Inflation is expected to rise at a monthly rate of 0.5% in February and March, Hoffman added, a rate which would be seen as reasonable. "If it does, the central bank could lower interest rates."

Bezeq rose 3.2% from last Thursday, as the phone company reported fourth-quarter net income rose 32% due to an increase in the number of phone lines installed in the country. Yesterday, Bezeq shares retraced 1%.

Other declining shares on the Maof Index included investment companies IDB Holding Corp., which fell 1.75% and IDB Development Corp., which fell 1.5%.

FTSE bounces back

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

LONDON (Reuters) - The FTSE 100 closed down but above the day's lows after taking a buffeting from conflicting economic indicators from the United States. Early gains by US stocks helped the FTSE to bounce by the close, and the index ended 10.6 points lower at 3,727.6 - eroding Wednesday's gains but leaving the index still trapped in the range between 3,689 and 3,792 it has been in since January 16.

FRANKFURT - The stock market set a new all-time high early but failed to hold its gains and ended floor trade only marginally higher as futures prices weakened. The DAX index, which measures 30 blue-chip stocks, reached a record 2,484.48 points near the open but slipped to close floor trade at 2,473.55, up only 1.05 points on the day but still a record high close for floor trading. In post-bourse trade the Dax finally ended the day at 2,485.18 points as German debt prices pared their losses and the dollar strengthened in the afternoon.

PARIS - Shares closed slightly lower in a listless market after recent excitement over Paribas' provisions and Chargeurs' merger plans. Shares were mainly depressed due to lower bond prices. The CAC-40 index closed down 6.12 at 1,990.77.

ZURICH - Shares closed easier on profit-taking but dealers said the market showed considerable resilience against today's selling. They said basic sentiment

LONDON - The blue-chip SMI index would test its all-time high at 3,400 points. The broad SPI index was down 1.19 points to 1,217.57.

TOKYO - Stocks ended higher as dealers bought back short positions in the futures market in late trade. The Nikkei average finished above 20,000 after it closed below that level on Wednesday for the first time this year. The Nikkei advanced 205.40 points or 1.03 percent to 20,125.37.

HONG KONG - Stocks closed sharply lower mainly on concerns about Wall Street's volatility and Sino-US trade tensions. The blue-chip Hang Seng Index dived 138.97 points or 1.23 percent to end at 11,125.68.

SYDNEY - The share market stormed home to a higher close, turning in its strongest performance of the week with the gold and bank sectors leading the way. The All Ordinaries index was 24.3 points higher at 2,290.0.

JOHANNESBURG - Shares ended mixed after a strange day which saw trading hampered at first by false rumors about President Nelson Mandela's health and then becoming active once South Africa won a World Cup cricket match against Pakistan. The All-share index inched 2.1 points higher to 6,705.4. The industrial index dropped 34.9 points to 8,307.1 and the Gold index gained 56.7 points to 1,786.1.

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Blue-chip stocks extended their losing streak into a fourth session yesterday as the market focused anew on the prospects of a US default in March if no action is taken by Congress to raise the nation's debt limit.

Based on early and unofficial data, the Dow Jones industrial average was off 20.59 points yesterday as the market focused anew on the prospects of a US default in March if no action is taken by Congress to raise the nation's debt limit.

CURRENCY CROSS RATES table with columns for MARK, STERLING, YEN, SF, FF.

Key Representative Rates table with columns for US dollar, Sterling, Mark and their respective NIS rates.

INFLATION MARKETS

New York market indexes table listing various indices like DJ Industrial, DJ 30, NYSE, etc.

Other stock market indexes

Table listing various stock market indexes like FTSE 100, Nikkei, etc.

Israeli stocks in NY

Table listing Israeli stocks traded in NY like AMEX, NYSE, etc.

INFLATION MARKETS

Dollar cross rates (US) table listing various dollar rates.

Labor rates

Table listing various labor rates for different periods.

Foreign financial data courtesy of CommStock Trading Ltd.

Futures, Options, Stocks, Bonds and Mutual Funds 34 Ben Yehuda St, Jerusalem, Tel. 02-244963, 03-5758826 Fax. 02-244876

INFLATION MARKETS

US commodities

Table listing US commodity prices like Cocoa, Sugar, etc.

London commodities

Table listing London commodity prices like Cocoa, Sugar, etc.

Spot metal prices (US)

Table listing spot metal prices for Gold, Silver, etc.

London metal prices

Table listing London metal prices for Gold, Silver, etc.

TEL AVIV STOCKS

Multi-sided trading Two-sided trading

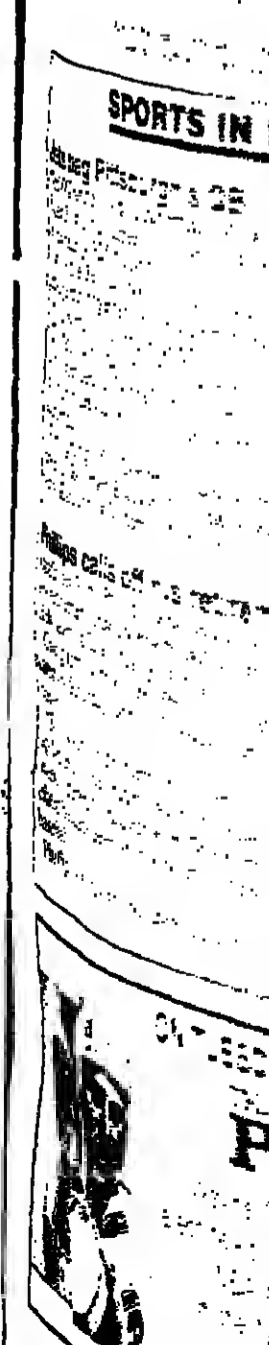
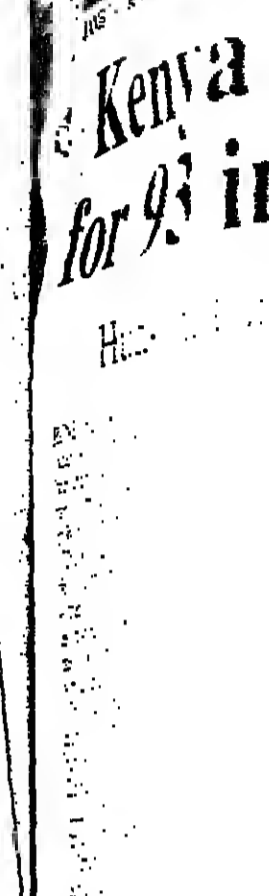
Main Tel Aviv Stock Market table with columns for Name, Price, Change, Volume, etc.

INTERNATIONAL STOCK PRICES

Large table listing international stock prices for various countries and companies.

CommStock Trading Ltd. (Date 29-FEB-96)

CommStock Trading Ltd. (Date 29-FEB-96)



Amir's lawyers deny discord

RAINE MARCUS

THE trial Yigal Amir will resume Sunday, but his attorneys, Gabi Shabar and Shmuel Fleishman, yesterday vehemently denied radio reports they are at odds over their line of defense.

"Each of us has different areas of responsibility and is dealing with different parts of the defense," said Fleishman, who will apparently concentrate on whether the murder was premeditated or not.

Shabar did not rule out the possibility that Amir was provoked into killing Yitzhak Rabin on November 4 by Avishai Raviv, the head of Eyal, an extreme right-wing organization, who was later alleged to be a GSS informer. Shabar said several people heard Raviv provoke Amir several times, urging him to carry out the murder, and they may be called as defense witnesses. But other sources said the Raviv theory is "total nonsense."

"The case is definitely not black and white, as it may appear

on the surface," Shabar said. "There is all sorts of information which has come to our attention, and we may use anything we consider appropriate."

Shabar has still not decided if he will use Amir's previous statements that he did not intend to murder Rabin, but merely paralyze him as a line of defense.

"All options are open," he said, "including the one of diminished responsibility."

Following several meetings between psychiatrists and Amir, psychiatric evaluations are currently being prepared, but will probably not be ready by Sunday.

On Wednesday, Fleishman, Shabar and lawyer Jonathan Ray Goldberg met with Amir, who objects to any arguments claiming that he was in any way insane or suffering from diminished responsibility when he shot Rabin.

However sources said that if the psychiatrists' report shows that Amir was mentally disturbed, the defense will use this.

Poor turnout for blood probe

JUDY SIEGEL

A few weeks after Ethiopian immigrants demonstrated against Magen David Adom's policy of destroying their blood donations, the Navoo Commission investigating the matter held its first public hearing to a nearly empty auditorium yesterday.

No Ethiopian immigrants turned up, and only two or three spectators took seats along with half a dozen journalists and organizers.

"We can't explain why they didn't come. They were invited, and notice of the first meeting appeared in the press," said Yisrael Cohen, the media adviser to the committee, which was appointed by Prime Minister Shimon Peres after the uproar over MDA's policy to avoid using the blood donated by Ethiopian immigrants, who are at relatively high risk for HIV and other diseases.

The committee is chaired by former president Yitzhak Navon,

and includes two Ethiopian immigrants - social worker Nalmar Hillel and Ethiopian Immigrant Association chairman Adiso Massala. Other members are Prof. Eliezer Rachmilevich, Yehzekel Zakai, Dr. Eliahu Winograd, and Haim Nagan.

The session heard surveys of the history of the Jews in Ethiopia from researchers Dr. Shoshana Ben-Dor and Dr. Shalva Weill; recollections of the community's aliya and a discussion of its absorption here by Absorption Minister Yair Tzaban.

He said neither he nor Health Minister Ephraim Sneh knew that MDA was not using blood donations from Ethiopian Jews. "If we had known, we would have taken action," he said. The matter is not just a medical one, but has many other implications, Tzaban added.

He said it is forbidden to establish a connection between a medi-



Former president Yitzhak Navon begins hearing testimony yesterday at the first public hearing on the handling of blood donations from Ethiopian immigrants. Next to him is another member of the inquiry panel, social worker Nalmar Hillel. (Brian Hender)

cal or social pathology and a certain ethnic community. "Any financial price should have been spent to find ways in the use of the blood of Ethiopian immigrants, and there should not have been a policy based on not telling the truth, because many people were partner to this 'secret.'"

Tzaban noted that the violent reactions of some demonstrators showed their anger not only over the blood donation affair but also over the rabbi's failure to recognize them fully as Jews. Only a small minority of protesters were violent, he said.

WEATHER

Jerusalem	9-11
Tel Aviv	13-18
Beer Sheva	13-19
Haifa	12-17
Tiberias	13-17
Asula	12-16
Samarina	11-13
Einat	17-22
Dand Sea	18-21
Colin	8-10

Forecast: Significant drop in temperatures. Partly cloudy. Possibility of local showers. Shabbat: Further drop in temperatures. Partly cloudy. Local showers in the north and center.

AROUND THE WORLD

Location	Low	High	Cloud
London	8	12	cloudy
Paris	9	13	cloudy
Rome	10	14	cloudy
Madrid	11	15	cloudy
Barcelona	12	16	cloudy
Amsterdam	13	17	cloudy
Brussels	14	18	cloudy
Frankfurt	15	19	cloudy
Cologne	16	20	cloudy
Munich	17	21	cloudy

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Banks open today; 5-day week delayed

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE commercial banks will be open today, following Histadrut Chairman Amir Peretz's decision to delay the move to a five-day work week. Zion Shema, bank workers union leader, said the change, which was supposed to start today, would be delayed by six to eight weeks.

The Histadrut said the delay is due to the bank workers committee failure to agree on the same day to keep banks closed.

All of the banks plan to close Friday except for Bank Leumi, which is insisting on Sunday. Peretz said the delay is also due to Supervisor of Banks Ze'ev Abeles' and Monopolies Supervisor Yoram Turbovitz's request to keep banks open until they examine the implications of the closure on the economy.

Israel Radio reported yesterday that the Bank Leumi works committee was threatening to close the bank on Sunday, as part of a unilateral move to a five-day week. There was no response from management.

Gas and heating fuel prices go up

FUEL prices were increased as of midnight last night, due to regional price rises and changes in the exchange rate, the Energy Ministry said. The price of 96 octane gas was increased by 1.5 percent, to NIS 2.70 a liter from NIS 2.66. Unleaded fuel went up

1.16% to NIS 2.61 a liter from NIS 2.58. Heating fuel went up 12.8%, while transportation fuel prices increased by 12.2%. Light industrial fuel went up 6.5%; heavy industrial and Electric Corporation fuel went up 3.9%. (Itin)

IAI signs satellite deal with US firm

STEVE RODAN

ISRAEL Aircraft Industry has formed a joint venture with a US firm with the aim of operating a commercial imagery satellite by the end of 1997, executives said yesterday.

The move, following two years of negotiations, comes after the Defense Ministry set guidelines for IAI to enter the commercial imagery market.

IAI's partner is Core Software Technology of Pasadena, California, the operator of North American ImageNet. The company provides information services and products, including satellite and aerial imagery, computer and demographic data.

IAI executives, stressing they will not finance the program on their own, said both they and Core will now seek partners to manufacture and launch a constellation of high-resolution remote sensing satellites.

They said the project requires an investment of between \$60 million and \$80m.

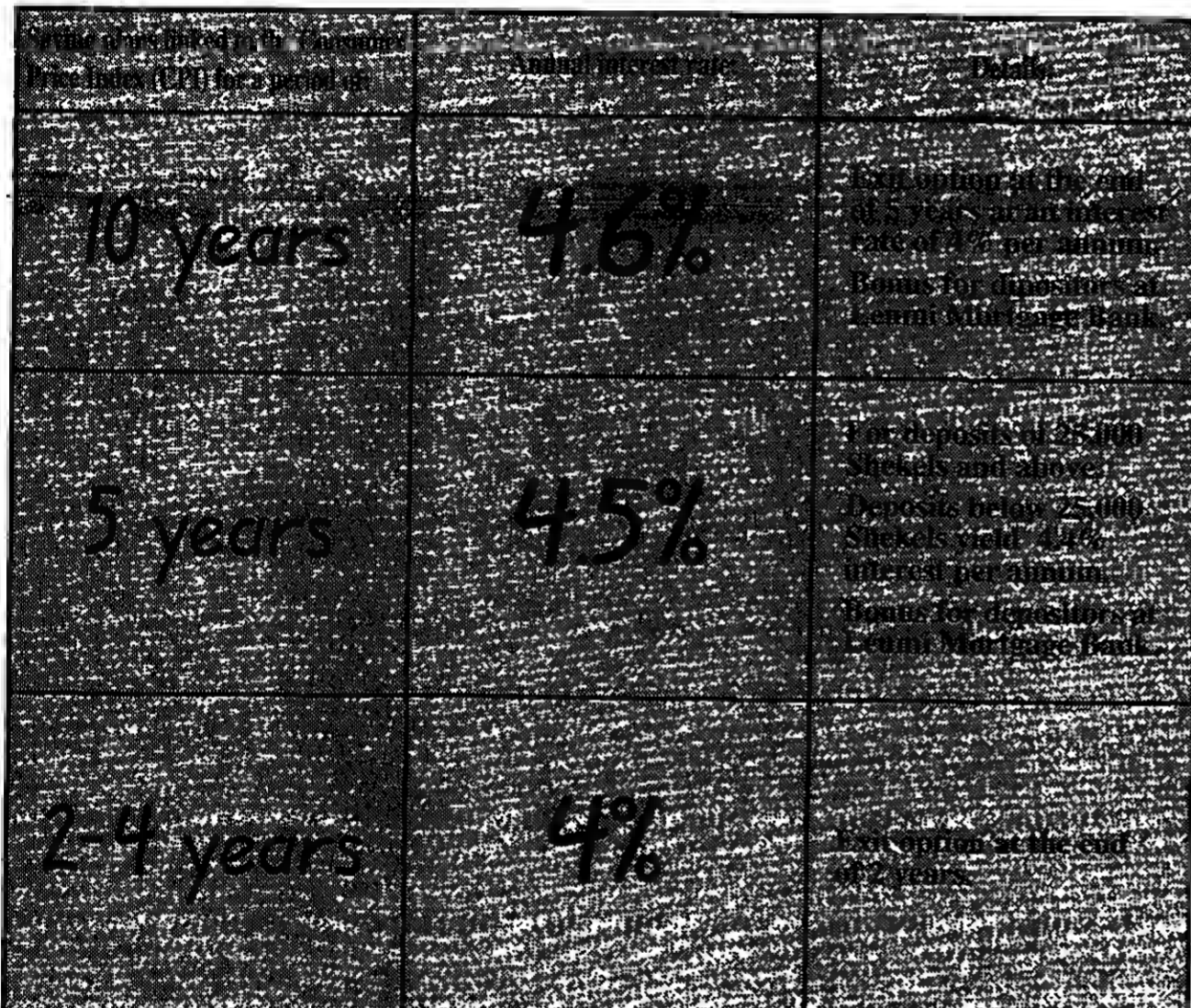
"IAI has been involved in space projects for many years and is continually looking for new opportunities to expand its market," said Shmuel Alkon, corporate vice president and general manager of IAI's Electronic Group. "We are looking for other companies to invest, and we might even issue a stock to raise money."

IAI sources said the proposal for a partnership with Core was settled last year. Under the arrangement, IAI would operate the satellite and Core would distribute the imagery through its worldwide computer network.

The civilian uses for the imaging would be in the fields of mapping, ecology, agriculture and fishing.

But Israeli defense officials opposed the joint venture. Some of them doubted that IAI, a government company, would profit by entering the commercial imagery market.

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